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ASPECTS REGARDING THE LEVEL OF AWARENESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS ON DRUG USE

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Abstract: The objective of this paper is to present certain aspects related to the level of knowledge among parents and teachers regarding illegal drug use among children and adolescents.

Material and methods. This quantitative study was conducted in 2024 with the participation of 809 individuals of both genders from various localities across Romania. Participation was voluntary, based on freely given written consent, while respecting anonymity and allowing withdrawal at any stage of the study. An omnibus questionnaire consisting of 26 items was applied. For this paper, items related to parents' and teachers' knowledge regarding signs and interventions associated with children's and adolescents' illegal drug use were selected. Results were statistically processed using Spearman's correlation.

Results. The following correlations were identified: a very weak correlation between children's illegal drug use and recognizing the signs of illegal drug use; a moderate correlation between knowledge of children's peer groups and awareness of the places where children spend their free time; a moderate correlation between knowledge of how to obtain tests for illegal drugs and knowledge of where to report illegal drug use; and a weak to moderate correlation between appreciation of information sources on illegal drugs and assessing the accessibility of information about illegal drugs.

Discussions and conclusions. Most respondents assessed the accessibility of information sources on illegal drugs as limited. Therefore, it is necessary to implement informational campaigns targeting adults—particularly parents and teachers—and not solely young people, focusing on the harmful effects associated with illegal drug consumption.

Keywords: parents, teachers, illegal drugs

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is marked by significant anatomical, physiological, and behavioral changes. Beyond heredity and prenatal and postnatal factors, various

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characteristics of puberty and adolescence shape distinct patterns of functioning and development. Furthermore, to broaden the scope of discussion and achieve a comprehensive overview, other personal and social factors influence the adolescent trajectory: dietary habits, sleep patterns, medications, and surgical interventions experienced in early childhood, as well as physical, mental, economic, and psychological stress. Substance abuse (such as caffeine, nicotine, and ethanol) and sex hormones, including estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone, also play significant roles. All these factors influence brain development and maturation in adolescents, as illustrated in the following figure (Arian *et al.*, 2013) :

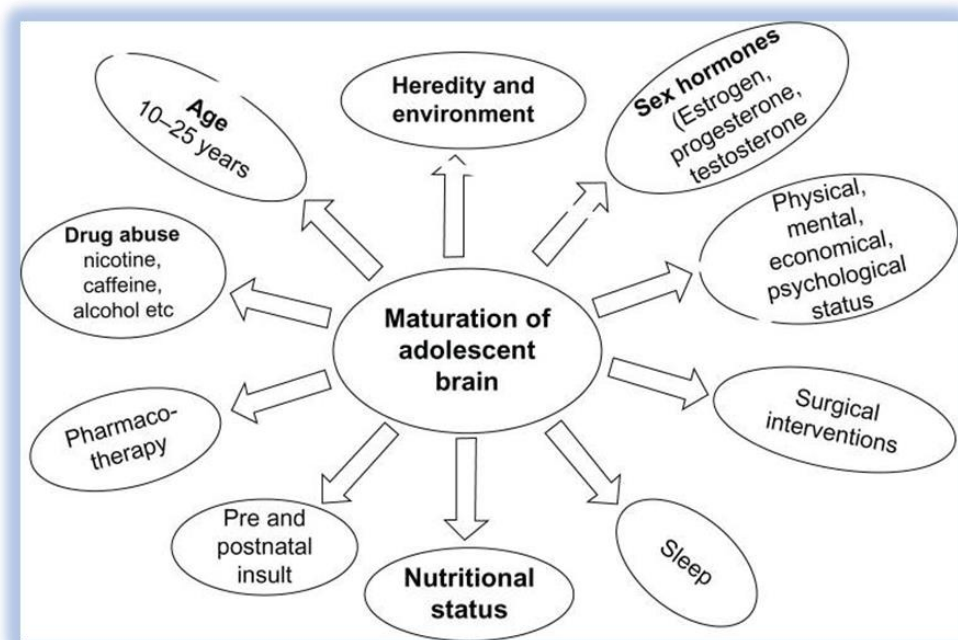


Figure 1. Factors influencing adolescent brain development (Source: Arian *et al.*, 2013: 450)

Considering all these specific features and the fact that adolescents feel the need to experiment and discover the world, while simultaneously undergoing a period of self-discovery and self-definition, adult behavior and communication with adolescents become essential. Studies show that parental depression, rejection, or cold relationships can intensify depression and depressive states among adolescents (Johnco *et al.*, 2021). Depression and anxiety are two of the most common mental health problems among young people (Merikangas *et al.*, 2010).

Many children and adolescents face difficult circumstances during a life stage that should be characterized by opportunities and hope for a healthy and fulfilling future. In Europe and Central Asia, humanitarian and geopolitical crises, climate-related events, economic impacts, and post-pandemic effects have harmful consequences on children. Actions are required to address increasing socioeconomic inequality and focus specifically on children in vulnerable situations (Black *et al.*,

2025), as these factors can lead to drug use among children and adolescents, as well as addiction to digital technology. A U.S.-based study conducted with a sample of 8,006 early adolescents aged between 11 and 12 years, aimed at evaluating prospective associations between screen time and substance experimentation (alcohol, nicotine, cannabis, any substance use), found that total screen time was prospectively associated with experimentation with alcohol, nicotine, and cannabis. Social media use and texting were also associated with higher odds of experimenting with alcohol, cannabis, and nicotine, and video chatting was associated with higher odds of experimenting with cannabis and nicotine. The study suggests that digital social connections facilitated by social media, texting, and video chatting are contemporary screen-related modes associated with substance experimentation among early adolescents. Further research is needed to explore the underlying mechanisms of these associations to inform intervention strategies (Nagata *et al.*, 2025).

The objective of this paper is to present certain aspects related to the level of knowledge among parents and teachers regarding illegal drug use among children and adolescents.

The working hypotheses from which this study was initiated were as follows:

1. That there is a strong correlation between the means through which drugs are procured and the social circles of the study participants;
2. That there is a weak correlation between the use of illegal drugs by children and the ability to recognize signs of illegal drug use;
3. That there is a strong correlation between the awareness of children's social circles and knowledge of the places where they spend their free time;
4. That there is a strong correlation between knowledge regarding the availability of tests for detecting illegal drugs and knowledge of where to report illegal drug consumption;
5. That there is a weak correlation between the information sources used and the perceived accessibility of these sources.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This quantitative study was conducted in 2024 with the participation of a sample of 809 individuals of both genders, from various localities across Romania. The research primarily targeted parents and teachers, but also included 7 adolescents and 6 children, for whom parental consent was obtained. Participation was voluntary, based on written and freely given consent, while ensuring anonymity and allowing withdrawal at any point during the study. The research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the “Fr. I. Rainer” Institute of Anthropology of the Romanian Academy, approval number 487/27.03.2024. An “omnibus” questionnaire with 26 items was used, from which the items relevant to parents’ and teachers’ knowledge of signs and interventions related to illegal drug

use among children and adolescents were selected for this paper. The results were statistically processed using Spearman's correlation.

RESULTS

Socio-demographic Aspects of the Study Sample

The age of the study participants ranged from 8 to 76 years, with a mean age of 42.25 (Figure 2).

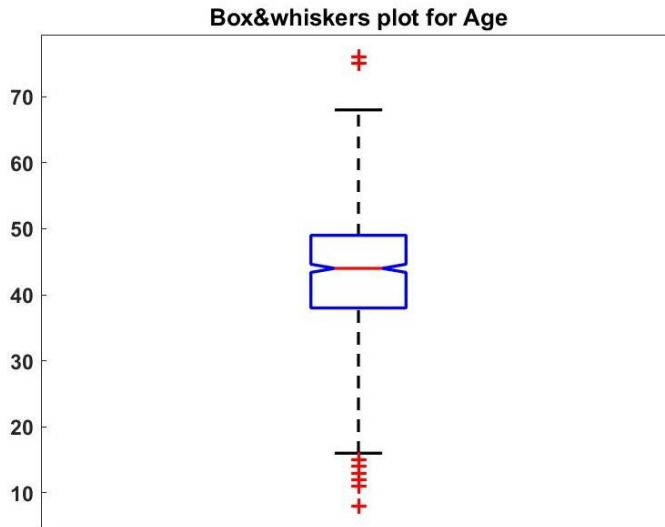


Figure 2. Age distribution of the sample

The majority of participants in the study sample were between the ages of 38 and 49, given that the research was primarily aimed at parents and teaching staff.

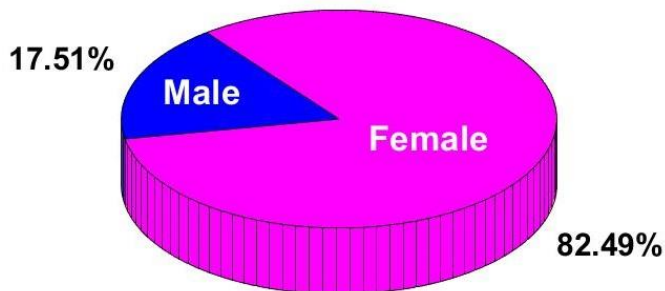


Figure 3. Gender distribution of the sample

Out of the 809 subjects, 82.49% were female and 17.51% were male (Figure 3). The gender variable was not proportionally distributed, with female participants being predominant.

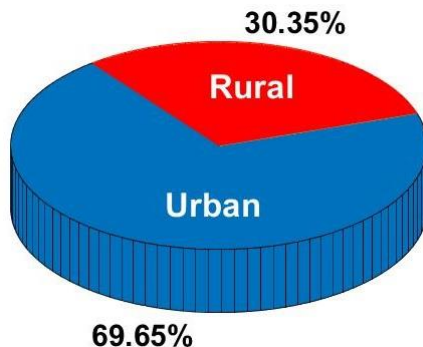


Figure 4. Distribution of the sample by area of residence

Among the participants, 69.65% were from urban areas and 30.35% from rural areas (Figure 4).

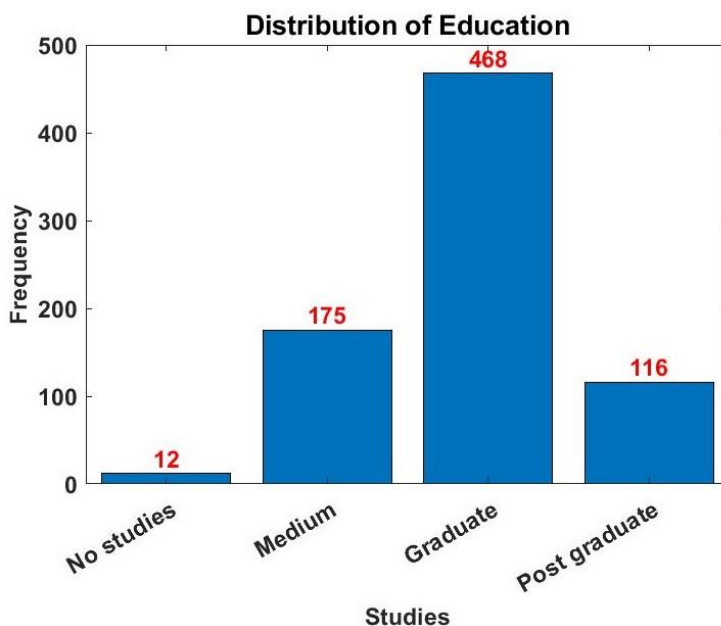


Figure 5. Distribution of the sample by level of education

Among the study participants, 1.56% had no formal education, 22.70% had medium-level education, 60.70% had graduate-level education, and 15.05% had postgraduate education (Figure 5). To gain a deeper understanding of the

phenomenon, several Spearman correlations were conducted. The use of Spearman's correlation was more appropriate in this context than Pearson's correlation, as the data was Likert-type (survey-based data).

Table 1.
Correlation between ways of finding drugs and kids entourage

<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>value</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<i>Spearman's correlation</i>	0.0381	0.2906

The Spearman's correlation coefficient is 0.038, and $p=0.296$, which indicates that there is no correlation between the ways of finding drugs by children and their entourage.

Table 2.
Correlation between use of illegal drugs by kids and sign recognition of illegal drug use

<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>value</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<i>Spearman's correlation</i>	0.0835	0.0205

It seems that there is a very weak correlation between the use of illegal drugs by kids and sign recognition of illegal drug use, $\rho=0.083$ and $p=0.02$.

Table 3.
Correlation between knowledge of children's peer groups and the places where children spend their free time

<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>value</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<i>Spearman's correlation</i>	0.5174	0

The Spearman's correlation coefficient is situated approximately midway within the interval between 0 and 1 ($\rho = 0.51$), indicating a moderate correlation between the Knowledge of Kids entourage and Knowledge of where kids spend free time.

Table 4.
Correlation between knowledge of how to find tests for detecting illegal drugs and knowledge of where to report illegal drug use

<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>value</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<i>Spearman's correlation</i>	0.4613	0

$\rho=0.461$ shows a moderate correlation between the knowledge of finding tests for illegal drugs and knowledge of where to report use of illegal drugs.

Table 5.
Correlation between the information sources used and the perceived accessibility of those sources

<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>value</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<i>Spearman's correlation</i>	0.2990	0

The weak to moderate correlation between the appreciation on the information sources on illegal drugs and assessing the accessibility of illegal drugs information is supported by the value of the Spearman's correlation coefficient, $\rho = 0.3$.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the presented results indicates an absence of significant correlation between the methods through which children procure illicit substances and the influence exerted by their peer groups (Table 1), disproving the working hypothesis. This outcome stands in contrast to the findings of a separate study conducted on a cohort of 731 individuals (comprising 117 males, 596 females, and 18 who did not disclose their gender), aged between 14 and 57 years, which revealed that nearly half of the users reported having friends who also engaged in drug use. Furthermore, the study underscored that during adolescence, peer influence may supersede familial influence (Baciu, 2024). These findings suggest that children may be obtaining drugs from sources other than their peers or classmates. The apparent ease of access to illicit substances, even among minors, accentuates the pressing need to intensify educational efforts aimed at reducing demand. Despite the high cost associated with health education, its long-term impact renders it a valuable preventive strategy (Kuhn *et al.*, 2013).

Illicit substances are increasingly accessible via social media platforms. A descriptive study conducted in the United States in 2022 investigated drug-related content across eleven social media platforms—namely Discord, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit, Snapchat, TikTok, Tumblr, Twitch, Twitter, and YouTube. The study concluded that ten of these platforms (all except TikTok) contained references to cannabis/marijuana; seven platforms (excluding Discord, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube) referenced cannabis derivatives; and five platforms (Reddit, Snapchat, TikTok, Tumblr, Twitter) discussed jurisdictional variations in cannabis legality. Although all platforms enforced some degree of restriction on minors' access to cannabis-related content, policy definitions of "promotion," approaches to legal jurisdictional differences, interactions by corporate entities, barriers against facilitation of sales, and enforcement mechanisms varied significantly and were frequently ambiguous. Consequently, the lack of clarity within social media policies regarding cannabis marketing may facilitate the promotion, distribution, and exposure of cannabis to underage audiences, thereby raising concerns regarding inadequate regulatory oversight (Berg *et al.*, 2023).

The extremely weak correlation between children's use of illicit drugs and the capacity of parents and/or educators to identify signs of such behavior (Table 2) suggests a widespread lack of awareness concerning the immediate effects of drug use, thereby hindering timely intervention, the working hypothesis being confirmed. This finding is particularly alarming given that the mean age of participants was 42.25 years (Figure 2), with 69.65% residing in urban areas (Figure 4), 60.70% holding university degrees, and 15.05% having completed

postgraduate education—factors typically associated with heightened awareness. Moreover, the majority of participants perceived access to information regarding illegal drugs to be insufficient (Table 5).

A large-scale survey conducted by Ishida *et al.* (2020), involving 9,003 participants, explored the primary sources of information on marijuana. The study found that the most influential sources frequently propagated misinformation, including claims that marijuana smoking offers preventive health benefits, that secondhand or prenatal exposure poses negligible or no risk, and that marijuana is non-addictive. Alarming, 43% of respondents endorsed at least one medically unsupported belief regarding marijuana. Individuals who identified social media, the internet, friends, or relatives as their main sources of information were significantly more likely to accept these inaccurate assertions. These findings underscore the urgent need for robust public health campaigns to combat widespread misinformation surrounding marijuana use (Ishida, 2020).

Study participants frequently reported being familiar with their children's peer groups and the locations where they spent their leisure time—a claim supported by the moderate correlation between these two variables (Table 3), the working hypothesis being partially confirmed. Case study analyses indicate that drug users originate from a wide spectrum of social and educational backgrounds, with curiosity and peer influence emerging as critical factors in the initiation of drug use (Baciú, 2017). During adolescence, the influence of peer groups becomes particularly pronounced (Brown, 1989), with individuals often adopting the behaviors and attitudes of their peers—including drug use—as a means of attaining social acceptance (Evans *et al.*, 2006). In many instances, peer influence outweighs familial guidance (Bălăceanu Stolnici *et al.*, 2012). The family, in its pedagogical capacity, must strive to maintain open and consistent communication with young individuals. In families where drug use is present, the issue is often denied in its incipient stages, and both the user and the problem are frequently neglected (Alexandru, 2007). Typically, drug users are the product of peer pressure, curiosity, familial neglect, and informational deficits. Therefore, effective preventive interventions must address all contributing factors in a holistic manner.

A 2023 study conducted in Oslo (Lars *et al.*, 2025), involving 9,741 high school students across 95 neighborhoods and 25 educational institutions, found that adolescent substance use is significantly influenced by both neighborhood characteristics and the cultural milieu of the schools they attend.

Additionally, a longitudinal study tracking early adolescents from 1990 to 1993 and young adults from 1998 to 2000 revealed strong associations between early adolescent substance use, the development of subsequent substance use disorders, and the emergence of adult psychiatric conditions. These associations were found to vary across racial and ethnic lines, being most prominent among foreign-born African-American and Hispanic individuals—groups that reported the lowest rates of adolescent substance use. These insights are critical for the design and implementation of both primary and secondary preventive strategies (Gil *et al.*, 2004).

The moderate correlation between knowledge of how to obtain drug tests and awareness of reporting mechanisms for illegal drug use (Table 4) suggests a partial but notable awareness among participants regarding the available resources for detection and intervention. This working hypothesis was partially confirmed. Cannabis remains the most widely used illicit substance within the European Union (EMCDDA, 2022), including Romania. Trends indicate an increase in cannabis use, particularly in Southern Europe and the Balkan regions (Kraus *et al.*, 2018).

Cannabis consumption during adolescence constitutes a major public health concern. A cross-sectional study conducted in Western Ireland, encompassing 4,897 adolescents, revealed that factors such as staying out past midnight, insufficient parental oversight, intergenerational detachment, and a lack of engagement in sports or volunteer activities were all positively associated with increased likelihood of cannabis use (Daly *et al.*, 2025).

According to Table 5, the correlation between the information sources used and the assessment of their accessibility is weak to moderate, the hypothesis being partially confirmed.

The prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other harmful substances among youth remains a persistent challenge, particularly within high-income nations. From a public health standpoint, the most effective strategy lies in delaying or entirely preventing the initiation of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use for as long as possible (Kristjansson *et al.*, 2019).

The findings of this study unequivocally highlight the imperative of implementing comprehensive educational campaigns addressing the deleterious effects of illicit drug use. These initiatives should not only target adolescents but must also extend to adults—particularly parents and educators—who play a pivotal role in early detection and prevention.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ON HEALTH: A MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

LĂCRĂMIOARA PETRE^{1*}

Abstract

Background: Environmental degradation and climate change are critical public health challenges, disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations and intensifying health disparities. A medical anthropology perspective highlights how cultural perceptions of illness, structural inequalities, and regional policies shape the experience and response to these environmental stressors.

Scope: This review aims to explore the multifaceted social and health consequences of climate change through a medical anthropological framework, emphasizing the significance of environmental violence, health disparities, and health policies.

Methods: This article employs a multidisciplinary approach rooted in medical anthropology, combining ethnographic case studies, literature review, and critical analysis of climate-health data.

Results: Key areas found as determinants in climate change's impact on global health are: environmental and climate-related health effects, the impact on vulnerable populations, cultural perceptions of illness, mental health challenges, and the role of policy and community engagement in adaptation.

Conclusions: Health outcomes from climate change are deeply rooted in cultural and social contexts. Medical anthropology offers essential insights for designing equitable, culturally informed interventions that address both health and environmental justice.

Keywords: climate change, social impact, health disparities, medical anthropology

INTRODUCTION

Climate change is increasingly recognized as a significant driver of natural disasters, leading to heightened risks for human health, economic stability, and global infrastructure. Recent scientific literature underscores the escalating frequency and severity of climate-related disasters, emphasizing the urgent need for comprehensive mitigation and adaptation strategies, particularly for vulnerable geographical regions and populations.

The incidence of climate-related disasters has shown a marked increase over recent decades. Between 2000 and 2019, approximately 6,681 climate-related events were reported globally, nearly doubling the 3,656 events reported from 1980

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to 1999. These events encompass floods, storms, droughts, landslides, extreme temperatures, and wildfires, excluding geophysical events like earthquakes and volcanic eruptions (United Nations, 2020). In 2019 alone, 396 disasters resulted in 11,755 fatalities, affected 95 million individuals, and incurred economic losses nearing US\$130 billion. Asia bore the brunt of these impacts, accounting for 40% of events, 45% of deaths, and 74% of all people affected. (CRED, 2019)

Risks associated with extreme weather and climate events arise from the interplay between physical hazards (e.g., heat, wind, and precipitation), the level of exposure, the vulnerability of individuals and communities, and their capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from such events. (Ebi *et al*, 2021a)

The health impacts of climate-related disasters are profound and multifaceted. Extreme weather events contribute to increased mortality and morbidity through direct effects, such as injuries and fatalities, and indirect effects, such as the exacerbation of chronic diseases and mental health disorders, food and water insecurity, lack of hygiene and sanitation, infectious diseases proliferation, increased poverty, and forced migration. Additionally, climate-induced disasters such as floods, droughts, and wildfires contribute to injuries, loss of livelihoods, and displacement, leading to long-term psychological and social stress (Clayton *et al.*, 2017).

Eldos *et al.* (2025) examine the intricate relationship between climate change and human health in Qatar and conclude that environmental factors such as extreme heat and heavy precipitation increase the risk of incidence of *Campylobacter* infections, dengue fever, malaria, and cardiovascular mortality.

Additional risks to global health stemming from climate change include air pollution, escalating carbon dioxide concentrations, exposure to toxic substances, foodborne illnesses, and deficiencies in essential micronutrients. Several recent studies suggest that rising carbon dioxide levels adversely affect the nutritional quality of staple cereal crops, such as rice and wheat, notably diminishing the concentrations of protein, various micronutrients, and B, C, and E vitamins. (Ekele *et al*, 2025; Semba *et al*, 2022) Furthermore, climatic and other environmental alterations contribute to an overall decline in the yield of vegetables and legumes, which carries significant implications for non-communicable diseases prevention. (Heines A & Ebi K, 2019)

The One Health approach addresses these challenges by promoting collaborative efforts across sectors to monitor and mitigate health risks associated with environmental changes. The One Health philosophy is an integrative approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health, emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration to achieve optimal health outcomes across these domains. This approach is particularly relevant in addressing complex health challenges such as climate change, which impacts ecosystems and, consequently, human and animal health. (Carter *et al.*, 2024)

Swinburne and colleagues (2019) describe climate change as a pandemic due to its far-reaching ramifications for human health and the complex natural systems upon which we depend—commonly referred to as planetary health. Moreover, they

identify climate change as one of three concurrent global pandemics: obesity, under-nutrition, and climate change. Collectively termed **The Global Syndemic**, these interlinked crises have profound medical, social, and economic impacts, leading to loss of life, resource depletion, and the rise of chronic diseases (Swinburn *et al.*, 2019).

Medical anthropology provides critical insights into these complex dynamics by analyzing how cultural norms, belief systems, and social structures influence people's perceptions of environmental change and their capacity to respond to health risks. For example, studies have shown that Indigenous communities' local ecological knowledge contributes to effective resilience strategies, even as these populations face increasing climate-related pressures (Rudolph *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, medical anthropologists explore the social determinants of vulnerability—such as marginalization and environmental racism—that drive disparities in health outcomes (Baer & Singer, 2023).

As global health systems struggle to adapt to the growing burden of climate-related illnesses, incorporating medical anthropological perspectives is essential to developing culturally relevant and equitable interventions. By contextualizing health within broader ecological and sociopolitical systems, this discipline enriches both our understanding and our capacity to act in the face of the climate crisis (Cartwright E., 2019)

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS

Environmental health is increasingly influenced by anthropogenic factors, notably air pollution, exposure to toxic substances, and overpopulation. Air pollution significantly contributes to respiratory disorders. Fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) are linked to increased risks of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. (Sin *et al.*, 2023). Exposure to wildfire smoke, particularly fine particulate matter, is correlated with adverse health effects across multiple systems, encompassing the respiratory, ocular, cardiovascular, dermatological, nervous, immune, digestive, and reproductive systems. Toxicological investigations have demonstrated that inhaled wildfire particulate matter, upon deposition in the lungs and subsequent entry into the bloodstream, can incite profound systemic inflammation and oxidative stress, culminating in pulmonary and vascular dysfunction while contributing to the pathogenesis of cardio-respiratory diseases. Moreover, inhaled particulates may perturb the autonomic nervous system, which has been associated with cardiovascular health ramifications across diverse demographics, including gender, age, race, and geographic region, with children and the elderly being particularly susceptible to these deleterious effects. (Lei *et al.*, 2024). Proposed mechanisms for the detrimental effects of wildfire smoke on pulmonary health include disruption of the epithelial barrier, oxidative stress, an altered response to infection, epigenetic changes, shift of the Th1/Th2 immune response, and coincident increases in allergen exposures with wildfires. (Noah *et al.*, 2023) A recent report by the United

Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) highlights the growing threat of smoke inhalation, projecting a global increase in extreme wildfires of 14% by 2030, 30% by 2050, and 50% by the end of the century. The report also emphasizes the heightened risk of major wildfires in regions previously considered resistant, including the Arctic. (UNEP, 2023)

Exposure to pesticides and other hazardous substances continues to pose a significant environmental health challenge. In 2008, pesticides ranked as the ninth most frequently reported substance to poison control centers, with approximately 45% of all pesticide poisoning incidents involving children. Organophosphate and carbamate poisoning are among the most well-recognized acute poisoning syndromes. These can be diagnosed through diminished red blood cell cholinesterase levels, and effective antidotal therapy is available. Numerous studies reveal associations between parental use of pesticides—particularly insecticides—and the incidence of acute lymphocytic leukemia and brain tumors. Prenatal, household, and occupational exposures (both maternal and paternal) appear to constitute the most significant risks. Prospective cohort studies have established links between early-life exposure to organophosphate and organochlorine pesticides (notably DDT) and adverse effects on neurodevelopment and behavior. (Roberts JR & Karr CJ, 2013)

Overpopulation exacerbates environmental health challenges by increasing pollution levels and placing immense strain on public health systems. Urbanization leads to higher concentrations of air pollutants, increased noise pollution, reduced access to nutritious food, and elevated psychological stress. These issues require comprehensive interventions, public health policies, innovative smart city strategies, and healthcare programs that empower individuals to lead healthier lives (Chen *et al.*, 2024). Furthermore, densely populated areas often suffer from inadequate waste management and limited access to clean water, increasing the risk of disease transmission.

Human-induced environmental hazards pose significant threats to health and well-being, contributing to global patterns of morbidity, mortality, economic inequality, displacement, and insecurity. The impacts of anthropogenic environmental degradation on global health are complex, as are the factors driving them. The concept of *environmental violence* offers a potentially powerful framework for understanding and addressing these challenges. Richard Marcantonio and Agustín Fuentes (2023) propose a refined definition of environmental violence as “direct and indirect harm experienced by humans due to toxic and non-toxic pollutants put into a local—and concurrently the global—ecosystem through human activities and processes.” This definition highlights the excessive pollution caused by human actions as a critical environmental health threat to humanity.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ON HEALTH

Climate change affects health both directly and indirectly. Direct impacts include heat-related illnesses and injuries caused by extreme weather events.

Indirect consequences encompass food and water scarcity, mental health challenges, and the exacerbation of existing health inequities.

The frequency and severity of heatwaves have increased dramatically. Between 2000 and 2019, studies estimate that approximately 489,000 heat-related deaths occurred each year, with 45% of these in Asia and 36% in Europe (Zhao *et al.*, 2021). Since the beginning of the century, Europe has experienced several extreme heatwaves—in 2003, 2010, 2015, 2018, 2022, and 2024—that have collectively caused over 200,000 heat-related deaths. During the summer of 2003, Europe faced an intense heatwave that resulted in significant mortality. A study analyzing data from 16 European countries estimated that more than 70,000 excess deaths occurred during this period, with the elderly and individuals with chronic health conditions being the most affected (Robine *et al.*, 2008). In the summer of 2018, 220 million more people over the age of 65 were exposed to heatwaves compared with 2000 (Watts *et al.*, 2019). In 2022, an estimated 61,672 heat-related deaths occurred (Ballester *et al.*, 2023).

Prolonged heat events are linked to heatstroke, dehydration, and worsening of chronic conditions like kidney and cardiovascular diseases, especially in vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those without access to cooling infrastructure. Urban heat islands exacerbate this effect, increasing mortality and emergency service demand during summer months. (Ebi *et al.*, 2021b)

A study conducted by Frasch and colleagues in Germany shows that extreme heat is associated with increased morbidity requiring emergency care, while both extreme heat and cold are linked to higher mortality rates and greater case severity. This findings underscores the urgent need for intensified efforts to mitigate the health ramifications of extreme temperatures. The repercussions of extreme cold tend to manifest over a period of four weeks, whereas the effects of heat appear more rapidly and typically subside almost entirely within the first week. Moreover, the combination of ice, snow, and freezing temperatures significantly impacts elderly and frail individuals, increasing their susceptibility to falls, accidents, and mobility impairments. (Frasch *et al.*, 2025)

Injuries resulting from extreme weather phenomena such as hurricanes, floods, and wildfires are increasingly prevalent (Ali *et al.*, 2019). These events not only cause immediate physical harm but also lead to long-term health complications, including mental health disorders arising from trauma and displacement. A study examining the impacts of climate change on the health of internally displaced persons in Bangladesh found that a significant proportion of respondents (38.1%) identified riverbank erosion as the primary cause of displacement, while 35.7% of households cited cyclones as the secondary reason for relocation. An overwhelming 97.6% of respondents acknowledged that disasters adversely affected their health in their current environment; notably, the majority (85.7%) reported physical injuries as a consequence of disasters in their present area, while 57.1% indicated that disaster-induced injuries had occurred in their previous location (Chowdhury *et al.*, 2020).

Food and water insecurity emerges from climate-induced disruptions in agricultural systems and water supply chains. Prolonged droughts, altered precipitation patterns, and extreme meteorological events jeopardize crop yields and compromise water quality, resulting in malnutrition and the proliferation of waterborne diseases.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AND HEALTH DISPARITIES

Vulnerable populations, encompassing Indigenous communities, women, and economically disadvantaged urban residents, endure a disproportionate burden stemming from structural inequalities that severely restrict access to healthcare, pristine environments, and adaptive infrastructure.

A systematic review by Ngamu (2023) highlights that the populations most vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change include women, children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities or chronic illnesses. Additionally, other at-risk groups include people experiencing homelessness, migrants, refugees, outdoor workers, and those living in precarious socio-economic conditions. Joseph and Doon have examined the impact of climate change on maternal and child health, emphasizing that climate-related events—particularly flooding—can have fatal consequences for pregnant women, especially in high-risk regions such as Nigeria, Ghana, and India (Joseph and Doon, 2023).

Certain populations are more susceptible to the health impacts of climate change due to socioeconomic, geographic, and political factors. For instance, Black women face unique health challenges under climate change, including increased risks of respiratory issues, maternal health complications and heat related deaths. The rate of heat-related deaths in African Americans is 150–200% greater than that for non-Hispanic Whites. (Myers *et al.* 2012) Furthermore, chronic stress from systemic racism and socioeconomic disparities contributes to health conditions like hypertension and cardiovascular disease, which can be exacerbated by climate-related stressors (Geronimus *et al.*, 2006).

Indigenous populations are uniquely vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change due to their close ties to the environment and reliance on traditional practices. Climate-induced disruptions, such as changing ecosystems and extreme weather events, threaten food security, cultural practices, and mental health among Indigenous communities (Ford, 2012). For instance, in the Arctic, Indigenous peoples face challenges such as permafrost thaw, changes to local landscapes, and sea ice loss, which impact traditional hunting, fishing, trapping, and traveling, leading to nutritional deficiencies and cultural disconnection (Cunsolo Willox *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, the psychological stress caused by environmental changes and displacement has been linked to increased rates of anxiety, depression, and substance abuse in Indigenous populations (Cunsolo Willox *et al.*, 2013).

Elderly adults exhibit heightened vulnerability to environmental changes and toxic exposures due to age-related physiological decline. Reduced metabolic rate, diminished immune responsiveness, and lower physiological reserve capacity contribute to their increased sensitivity. A higher burden of chronic disease further

impairs the ability of organ systems to withstand environmental stress. For instance, the aging central nervous system is more susceptible to heat-related cognitive dysfunction, including confusion and delirium. Similarly, cardiovascular strain during heat exposure elevates the risk of myocardial infarction. Prevalent conditions such as chronic disease exacerbate susceptibility to dehydration, acute renal failure, and liver shock, underscoring the significant health risks posed by climate-related stressors in this population (Carnes *et al.*, 2013).

CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS AND HEALTH BEHAVIORS

Understanding how different cultures perceive environmental and climate changes is crucial for effective health interventions. Cultural perceptions—encompassing beliefs, norms, values, and practices—directly influence health behaviors and outcomes across populations. These perceptions shape how people recognize symptoms, interpret disease causality, seek treatment, and adhere to medical recommendations. Medical anthropology provides valuable insights into these cultural dimensions, enabling the design of interventions that are culturally sensitive and more likely to be accepted by target communities.

For instance, in some communities, stigma associated with mental illness may hinder individuals from seeking psychiatric care (Chukwuma *et al.*, 2024). In others, cultural taboos around menstruation or childbirth may limit access to maternal health services (Kumar & Maity, 2022). Similarly, dietary customs and nutritional practices are intricately linked with tradition and cultural identity, playing a pivotal role in shaping the prevalence of diet-related conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

Cultural beliefs profoundly influence individuals' perceptions of health, illness, and environmental hazards. For example, conceptions of personal hygiene and disease prevention are closely intertwined with cultural norms and values. A study investigating the personal hygiene behaviors of students in Bangladesh revealed that hygiene practices within public universities are alarmingly inadequate, influenced by a complex set of dynamic and interconnected factors, including individual, contextual, and socio-psychological elements (Kabir *et al.*, 2021). These findings underscore the critical importance of considering cultural contexts when formulating public health strategies. Goldsmid (2013) emphasized that human behavior and cultural customs significantly shape the spectrum and incidence of diseases within communities, asserting that human behavior is often an overlooked factor in disease prevalence and transmission. Disregarding these cultural dimensions may result in ineffective health interventions and policies that fail to resonate with target populations.

In the realm of environmental health, cultural perceptions profoundly shape how communities respond to environmental hazards. In some Middle Eastern, South American, and Asian countries, natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, or wildfires are sometimes interpreted as divine punishment or cleansing. This belief can foster fatalism—the conviction that all events are predetermined and unavoidable—leading communities to neglect proactive measures such as

evacuation or flood-proofing homes, under the assumption that human action cannot alter divine will. This attitude contributes to learned helplessness, inadequate disaster preparedness, and sometimes increased mortality rates (O'Connell *et al.*, 2017). Conversely, populations in disaster-prone areas who have survived in these conditions for generations often possess valuable cultural knowledge and traditions that have supported their resilience. In the United States, Becker *et al.* (2008) demonstrated that integrating Native American knowledge with modern science enhances educational outreach on earthquake and tsunami preparedness, ultimately saving lives.

Medical anthropology plays a pivotal role in elucidating these responses by fostering awareness regarding the interplay between culture and health perceptions. Furthermore, it can significantly influence health policies and interventions, tailoring them to align with cultural beliefs and values.

MENTAL HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The psychological impacts of climate change, such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder, are increasingly recognized. These mental health issues often stem from experiences of environmental loss, displacement, and uncertainty about the future. Medical anthropology examines these experiences within cultural contexts, providing insights into community resilience and coping mechanisms.

Exposure to climate-related disasters, such as floods, wildfires, and hurricanes, has been linked to increased incidence of mental health disorders. For instance, individuals affected by flooding events have reported higher levels of depression, anxiety, and PTSD symptoms (Munro *et al.*, 2017). Similarly, prolonged drought conditions have been associated with elevated psychological distress among farming communities. Drought can profoundly disrupt both individual and communal economic endeavors, particularly for those whose livelihoods are contingent upon climatic conditions and access to water. Farmers endure diminished productivity, crop failures, and livestock mortality, leading to financial hardships and unemployment, as well as challenges related to food availability and accessibility. These economically related pathways interweave and interact in such a manner that they may culminate in depression, anxiety, and even suicide. (Vins *et al.*, 2015).

Beyond acute events, gradual environmental changes contribute to chronic stress and mental health issues. The concept of "solastalgia" describes the distress caused by environmental alterations to one's home environment, leading to feelings of loss and powerlessness (Albrecht *et al.*, 2007). This phenomenon has been observed in communities experiencing long-term environmental degradation, such as deforestation, desertification or natural disasters that permanently changed the environment, such as a volcano eruption. The destruction of residences, livestock, and agricultural land, along with the continual threat of living in a disaster-vulnerable area, significantly undermines individuals' established sense of belonging and identity. These losses and anxieties can provoke deep-seated feelings of powerlessness and solastalgia. (Warsini *et al.*, 2014).

Community-based interventions that incorporate cultural values and practices have shown promise in mitigating mental health impacts. Engaging local leaders and utilizing culturally appropriate communication strategies can enhance the effectiveness of mental health programs in climate-affected regions, community resilience and adaptation amid adversity. (Kirmayer *et al.*, 2009)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Effective policy responses to climate-related health issues require community engagement and culturally informed strategies. Medical and cultural anthropologists advocate for participatory approaches that involve communities in decision-making processes, ensuring that interventions are contextually appropriate and sustainable (Baer & Singer, 2023).

Community engagement is pivotal in developing and implementing health policies that are responsive to the needs of diverse populations. By involving community members in the research and decision-making processes, policies can be tailored to address specific cultural, social, and environmental contexts. For instance, Community-Based Participatory Research, a partnership approach that can facilitate capacity building and policy change through equitable engagement of diverse partners, has been instrumental in addressing health disparities by fostering equitable partnerships between researchers and community members. This participatory approach enhances the legitimacy and effectiveness of health interventions and policy change (Israel *et al.*, 2010).

Similarly, community engagement has been crucial in developing adaptation strategies to address the health impacts of climate change. By involving community members in identifying risks and developing solutions, policies can be more effectively tailored to local contexts and needs (Ford *et al.*, 2010).

POLICY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Effective policy and public health responses to environmental and climate change-related health challenges are increasingly recognized as essential components of global health strategies. These responses encompass mitigation efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation strategies to manage the health impacts of climate change.

Public health considerations are integral to climate change policy and planning. The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes that climate change affects health both directly and indirectly through factors such as extreme weather events, changes in disease patterns, and impacts on food and water security (WHO, 2021). Despite overwhelming evidence on the health impacts of climate change, many countries are not delivering adaptation responses proportionate to the rising risks their populations face. In 2020, 104 (63%) of 166 countries did not have a high level of implementation of national health emergency frameworks, leaving

them unprepared to respond to pandemics and climate-related health emergencies (Romanello *et al.*, 2021).

Integrating public health into climate policies involves assessing health risks, developing adaptation strategies, and ensuring that health systems are resilient to climate-related stresses. This integration requires collaboration across sectors and levels of government to effectively address the multifaceted health impacts of climate change.

CONCLUSION

Environmental and climate change represent some of the most pressing global health challenges of the 21st century. The health effects are multifaceted, ranging from acute impacts such as heat-related illnesses, respiratory disorders, and injuries caused by extreme weather events to long-term outcomes including mental health stressors, emerging infectious diseases, and nutritional insecurity. Importantly, these repercussions are not equitably distributed; vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, low-income communities, Indigenous peoples, and those residing in environmentally precarious regions, bear a disproportionate burden.

Medical anthropology offers a powerful interdisciplinary lens for examining the health effects of environmental change by integrating cultural, social, ecological, and biological dimensions of human experience. Through ethnographic research and culturally grounded analysis, medical anthropologists elucidate how communities interpret, experience, and respond to environmental health threats. This perspective is critical for identifying local knowledge systems, adaptive strategies, and barriers to care that may remain invisible through conventional biomedical or public health approaches. By framing climate-related health challenges as both biological and sociocultural phenomena, medical anthropology contributes to a more holistic understanding of global health crises. This integrative approach is essential for designing ethical, effective, and sustainable solutions that recognize the voices and needs of those most affected by environmental and climate change.

Public health and policy responses have increasingly recognized the necessity of integrating health considerations into climate planning. Heat-health action plans, clean energy transitions, and community-based adaptation strategies are vital components of a robust response. However, the effectiveness of these strategies depends on participatory approaches that incorporate local knowledge and build trust within communities. Moreover, the co-benefits of climate mitigation—such as improved air quality and reduced disease burden—underscore the importance of aligning environmental sustainability with health equity.

Ultimately, the intersection of environmental and climate change with health demands an interdisciplinary and community-oriented approach. By combining biomedical knowledge, public health infrastructure, and anthropological insight, humanity can better prepare for and respond to the health impacts of a changing climate—thereby protecting both human health and the ecosystems on which it depends.

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CONNAISSANCES RELATIVES À L'UTILISATION DES PLANTES MEDICINALES POUR LE TRAITEMENTS DES MALADIES DIGESTIVES CHEZ LA POPULATION DE MECHEHRIA ET NAAMA (SUD OUEST ALGERIEN)

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Abstract: This first contribution aims to collect data on medicinal plants used by the population of the municipalities of Mecheria and Naâma (Algeria) to treat digestive diseases. To this end, ethnobotanical surveys were conducted with 80 informants using a questionnaire consisting of questions on the demographic profile of the respondents and the plants used. The results show that women (55%) use medicinal plants more than men (45%). The vast majority of users are aged between 31 and 50 (73.75%). 40 belonging to 18 families and 37 genera were identified. These species come mainly from the Lamiaceae, Apiaceae, Fabaceae, and Asteraceae families. The most used among them are *Punica granatum* L., *Artemisia herba-alba* Asso, *Juniperus phoenicea* L., *Anthemis nobilis* L., *Rosmarinus officinalis* L., *Pinus halepensis* Mill, *Pistacia lentiscus* L., *Myrtus communis* L., *Foeniculum vulgare* Mill, *Thymus algeriensis* Boiss. & Reut., *Pimpinella anisum* L., *Ceratonia Siliqua* L., *Marrubium vulgare* L., *Lavandula stoechas* L., *Melissa officinalis* L., *Mentha spicata* L., *Teucrium polium* L. The leaves (27.50 %), the seeds (25 %) and the aerial part (22.50 %) are the parts most used in decoction (47.50 %) and infusion (40 %). The oral route is the only means of administration of the prepared remedies.

Keywords: Algeria, digestive diseases, ethnobotanical studies, parts used, preparation methods

INTRODUCTION

Les troubles gastro-intestinaux courants sont les douleurs gastriques, la diarrhée, la dysenterie, la gastro-entérite, la constipation, les vomissements etc. (OMS, 2003). Les troubles du système digestif ont une influence substantielle sur la morbidité et les taux de mortalité, dans le monde (OMS, 2013). Les statistiques annoncées par l'organisation mondiale de la santé montrent que les maladies du système digestif étaient la cinquième cause de mortalité mondiale, puisque près de

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100 millions de personnes sont décédés dans le monde en 2012 à cause de ces types de troubles (Tangjitman *et al.*, 2015). Les épidémies de diarrhée, de dysenterie ou de choléra provoquées par l'eau potable contaminée ont fait des millions de morts dans le monde, principalement des nourrissons et des enfants (Sarkar *et al.*, 2012, Ryan, 2011). En Algérie, la répartition de la morbidité selon la cause montre une prédominance des maladies de l'appareil digestif avec environ 21.19% en 2007 (INSP, 2007).

Au cours des dernières décennies, le domaine de la phytothérapie a connu une croissance exponentielle (Al-Snafi, 2016). D'après l'organisation mondiale de la santé, on estime que 70 à 80% de la population humaine, surtout dans les pays en développement, dépend des plantes médicinales pour les soins de santé primaires (WHO, 2008 ; Benaissa *et al.*, 2018 ; Hadjadj *et al.*, 2019 ; Benamara *et al.*, 2022). Les médicaments à base de plantes sont devenus ces dernières années plus populaires car ils ont des effets secondaires mineurs s'ils sont administrés correctement (Lehmann, 2013).

En Algérie, l'utilisation des plantes médicinales est répandue, non seulement parce qu'elles sont disponibles, mais aussi en raison de croyances et de pratiques culturelles persistantes (Hadjadj *et al.*, 2024c). Ces plantes sont majoritairement employées pour le traitement des maladies digestives et respiratoires (Hadjadj *et al.*, 2024c).

Dans ce contexte, cette étude a été réalisée afin de déterminer les plantes et les façons par lesquelles ces plantes sont utilisées pour le traitement des troubles digestifs chez les populations de la région de Nâama (Sud ouest Algérien).

MATERIELS ET METHODES

Zones d'étude

Cette recherche s'est déroulée dans la commune de Mecheria et celle de Naâma. C'est pratiquement les communes les plus peuplées dans la wilaya où l'activité d'herboristerie est plus développée (Fig. 1).

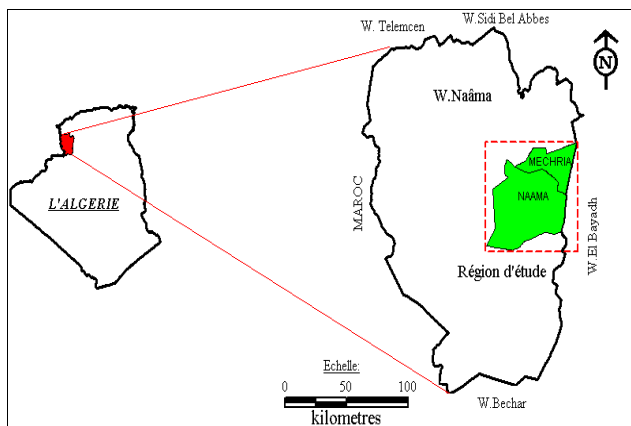


Figure 1 : Situation géographique des zones d'étude. Source : Auteur, 2025

La commune de Mecheria est située au Nord-Est de la wilaya de Naâma, entre 0°3' à 0°25' de longitude Est et 33°27' à 33°42' de latitude Nord (Haddouche *et al.*, 2007). Elle s'étend sur une superficie de 736,25 km² (DPSB, 2020). La commune est limitée :

- au Nord et à l'Ouest par la commune d'El BIODH;
- à l'Est par la wilaya d'El BAYADH;
- au Sud par la commune de NAAMA.

La commune de Mecheria compte environ 109 991 habitants en 2021 selon la direction de planification et de suivi budgétaire, ce qui représente presque 1/3 de la population totale de la wilaya de Naâma (DPSB, 2021). En termes de répartition spatiale 106 144 habitants résident dans les Agglomérations Chefs-lieux, soit 96,51 %, 978 habitants dans les Agglomérations secondaires, notamment Bighadid , soit 0,89 % et 2869 habitants dans la zone éparsée, ce qui représente 2,60 % (DPSB, 2021, Hadjadj *et al.*, 2024a).

La commune de Naâma couvre une superficie de 2 482,5 km². Elle est localisée entre la latitude 33°16' Nord et la longitude 0°19' Ouest.

La zone de Naâma est limitée:

- Au Nord par la commune de Mecheria et El Biodh;
- Au Sud par la commune d'Asla, Tiout et Ain Sefra;
- A Est par la wilaya d'El Bayadh;
- A l'Ouest par la commune d'Ain Ben Khelil.

La population à la commune de Naâma est estimée à environ 28 753 habitants en 2021 (DPSB, 2021). Cette population représente presque 9% de la population totale de la wilaya de Naâma. En termes de répartition spatiale, 20 613 habitants résident dans les Agglomérations Chefs-lieux, soit 71,69%, 7640 habitants dans les Agglomérations secondaires , soit 26,57% et 500 habitants dans la zone éparsée, ce qui représente 1,74% (DPSB, 2021, Hadjadj *et al.*, 2024a).

Les zones étudiées sont soumises à des pressions anthropozoïques assez importantes et des sécheresses avancées, dont dépendent les phénomènes irréversibles de désertisation et de dégradation des parcours (Hadjadj *et al.*, 2017). Notant que, au niveau de la wilaya de Naâma, les formations pré-forestières occupent les reliefs montagneux des Monts des Ksours (Mostefai et Grenot, 2006). Il s'agit de formations arbustives clairsemées de chênes verts (*Quercus ilex* subsp. *Ballota* (Desf.)), de pins d'Alep (*Pinus halepensis* Mill), de genévrier rouges et de genévrier oxycèdre (*Juniperus phoenicea* L et *Juniperus oxycedrus* subsp. *Rufescens* (Lien) Deb), Frêne dimorphe (*Fraxinus dimorpha* Coss. & Durieu (Despois, 1959; Hadjadj *et al.*, 2019; Hadjadj *et al.*, 2020a; Hadjadj *et al.*, 2021, Hadjadj *et al.*, 2024b).

Au niveau de la wilaya de Naâma, l'agriculture est le premier secteur économique et l'élevage, plus précisément celui des ovins, représente l'activité dominante sur laquelle repose l'économie locale de cette région reconnue pour sa vocation agropastorale (Youcef & Marouf, 2023).

Collecte des données

L'enquête ethnobotanique s'est déroulée avec des informateurs de la population des communes de Mecheria et de Naâma à l'aide de la méthode dite "boule de neige". Cette méthode non-probabiliste d'échantillonnage est parmi les plus utilisées en ethnobotanique (Wilhelm, 2014). Dans un premier temps on fait un tirage aléatoire au sein de la population cible. Puis, on demande à chacun des individus ayant été sélectionnés dans ce premier tirage d'inclure d'autres personnes dans l'enquête (Houéhanou *et al.*, 2016). Ce processus se poursuit jusqu'à la recherche de tous les informateurs compétents pour le sujet d'étude (Meddour *et al.*, 2022).

L'enquête ethnobotanique est réalisée par le biais d'un questionnaire semi-structuré préparé auparavant. Le questionnaire est rédigé en lagune française, il est traduit selon les exigences des enquêtes. Il comprend des questions sur: le profil sociologique et démographique de l'informateur (âge, genre, niveau éducatif et origine de l'information ethnobotanique), nom de la plante, parties utilisées, modes de préparation et d'administration, maladies traitées, effets secondaires observés.

Analyse des données

Nous avons calculé pour analyser les informations reçues, la fréquence de citation ($FC = \frac{n}{N} * 100$) d'une espèce qui correspond au ratio entre les informateurs mentionnant l'usage de l'espèce (n) et le nombre total d'informateurs participant à l'enquête (N) (Pradhan & Singh, 2019).

RESULTATS ET DISCUSSIONS

Profil sociodémographique des enquêtés

Table 1.
Caractéristiques sociodémographiques des informateurs

	Catégories	Effectifs	Taux (%)
Genre	Hommes	36	45
	Femmes	44	55
Classes d'âges (ans)	20 – 30	5	6.25
	31 – 40	30	37.5
	41 – 50	29	36.25
	51 - 60	13	16.25
	> 60	3	3.75

	Catégories	Effectifs	Taux (%)
Niveau éducatif	Illettré	6	7.5
	Primaire	13	16.25
	Moyen	11	13.75
	Lycée	37	46.25
	Universitaire	13	16.25
Origine de l'information ethnobotanique	Héritage familiale	35	43,75
	Herboristes et thérapeutes	21	26,25
	Expériences des autres	15	18,75
	Autres sources	9	11,25

Source: Auteurs, 2025

Au cours de cette recherche, nous avons interrogé 80 personnes dont 36 hommes (45%) et 44 femmes (55%). Il apparaît clairement que les femmes sont plus représentées dans notre échantillon par rapport aux hommes. En fait les femmes sont plus détentrices de savoirs locaux sur les plantes médicinales, elles ont la responsabilité de prendre soin de leur famille (Table 1).

Ces résultats sont constatés en Algérie par Boutabia *et al.* (2011); Hadjadj *et al.* (2019), Hadjadj *et al.* (2020b); Ouadeh *et al.* (2021); Benamara *et al.* (2022), Medour *et al.* (2022), Hadjadj *et al.* (2024c). Au Maroc, Salhi *et al.* (2010); Fakchich & Elachouri (2014); Kachmar *et al.* (2021) rapportent que les femmes pratiquent la médecine traditionnelle plus que les hommes. Des résultats similaires ont été obtenus en Tunisie par Ben salah *et al.* (2019); Karous *et al.* (2021). En Europe et en Asie c'est pratiquement les mêmes résultats (Caveroa *et al.*, 2011; Bartha *et al.*, 2015 ; Hong *et al.*, 2015).

L'utilisation des plantes médicinales est répandue dans toutes les tranches d'âge avec une prédominance des personnes âgées entre 31 à 40 ans (37.5%) et 41 à 50 ans (36.25%). Les personnes âgées entre 51 à 60 ans sont représentées par un taux de 16.25%. En fin, les personnes moins de 30 ans et plus de 60 ans sont faiblement représentées avec respectivement 6.25% et 3.25%. Nos résultats rejoignent ceux de El Hilah *et al.* (2015); Idm'hand *et al.* (2019); Boukezoula *et al.* (2022) qui confirment que les personnes âgées entre 41 à 50 ans connaissent parfaitement la phytothérapie traditionnelle par rapport aux personnes âgées de moins de 30 ans.

En outre, la plupart des études ethnobotaniques menées en Algérie avant la pandémie du COVID-19 montrent que les personnes les plus âgées (plus de 50 ans) utilisent fréquemment les plantes médicinales (Boutabia *et al.*, 2011; Miara *et al.*, 2013; Merazi *et al.*, 2016; Yasser *et al.*, 2018).

Dans notre recherche, c'est le contraire, cela se justifie par la prudence dont fait preuve cette catégorie qui souffrent dans la plupart des cas de maladies chroniques et ne prennent pas le risque de consommer des plantes pouvant provoquer des effets dangereux.

En matière de niveau éducatif, nous constatons que 46.25% sont des lyciens. Les personnes ayant un niveau universitaire et primaire sont représentées par le même pourcentage (16.25%). Les personnes restants ont soit un niveau moyen (13.25%), soit sont des illettrés (7.5%).

Ces résultats sont différents par rapport aux études ethnobotaniques qui rapportent que les utilisateurs de médecine traditionnelle sont principalement des analphabètes (Benaïche *et al.*, 2019; Senouci *et al.*, 2019; Chohra & Ferchichi, 2019; Merrouni *et al.*, 2021; Kefifa *et al.*, 2018; Karous *et al.*, 2021; Adoui *et al.*, 2024).

Concernant l'origine de l'information, presque la moitié des personnes enquêtées certifient que l'information est héritée de la famille (43.75 %), ce qui confirme la transmission et la diffusion des pratiques thérapeutiques traditionnelles d'une génération à l'autre. Les herboristes et les thérapeutes constituent une source potentielle d'information avec un taux de 26.25 %. L'expérience des autres arrive en troisième position avec un taux de 18.75 %. Enfin, 11.75% des personnes ont eu l'information à partir d'autres sources comme les livres, l'internet, les séminaires, etc.

Diverses études menées sur les plantes médicinales confirment que les pratiques médicinales sont héritées des ancêtres à travers les siècles (Mehdioui & Kahouadji, 2007; Medour *et al.*, 2022, Hadjadj *et al.*, 2024c). En effet, les premiers soins par les plantes médicinales sont effectués par des membres de la famille (Jdaïdi & Hasnaoui, 2007).

Plantes médicinales recensées

Sur la base des questionnaires réalisés, nous avons pu inventorier 40 plantes médicinales appartenant à 18 familles et 37 genres (Table 2).

Il s'avère que la famille des Lamiaceae est la plus représentée avec 11 espèces (27.50 %), suivie de la famille des Apiaceae avec 5 espèces (12.50 %). La famille des Fabaceae et Asteraceae occupent la troisième position avec 4 espèces (10 %). En quatrième place, on trouve la famille des Zingiberaceae et Anacardiaceae avec 4 espèces (5 %). Les autres familles sont représentées par une seule espèce, soit 2.50 % (Fig. 2).

Les résultats obtenus confirment la dominance des Lamiaceae, Apiaceae et Astéraceae en médecine traditionnelle algérienne. Ces résultats concordent avec d'autres études ethnobotaniques réalisées en Algérie telles que: Sarri *et al.*, 2014; Benaïssa *et al.*, 2018; Senouci *et al.*, 2019; Merrouni *et al.*, 2021; Khalfa *et al.*, 2022. La réputation de ces familles est due d'une part à leur large répartition en région méditerranéenne (Gonzalez-Tejero *et al.*, 2008 ; Meddour *et al.*, 2020), et d'autres part leur teneur élevée en phénols et en flavonoïdes, composés responsables de l'activité antioxydante (Khoudja *et al.*, 2014; Maulidiani *et al.*, 2014).

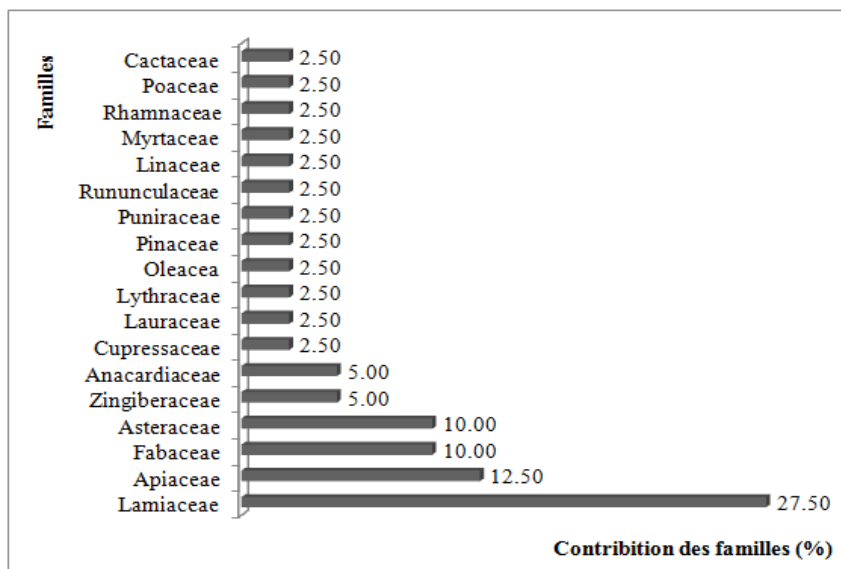


Figure 2. Richesse des familles en espèces. Source : Auteurs 2025

Table 2.
Plantes médicinales inventoriées

Famille	Nom scientifique	Nom vernaculaire	Statut	Parties utilisées	Modes de préparation	formes de consommation	Maladies traitées	CF (%)
Anacardiaceae	<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i> L.	El Darou	spontané	feuilles	Décoction	oral	Ulcère gastroduodénal Diarrhée Troubles gastro-intestinaux Hémorroïdes	12.50
	<i>Pistacia atlantica</i> Desf.	El Botm	spontané	graines	poudre	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	5
Apiaceae	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i> L.	Kemoune	cultivé	graines	décoction	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Ballonnement	7.50
	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill.	Bessbes	spontané	graines	décoction	oral	Ballonnement Troubles gastro-intestinaux	12.50
	<i>Pimpinella anisum</i> L.	Habet hlawa	cultivé	graines	décoction	oral	Ulcère duodénal Constipation Ballonnement Troubles gastro-intestinaux	10
	<i>Apium graveolens</i> L.	Krafs	cultivé	graines	décoction	oral	Ballonnement Troubles gastro-intestinaux	2.50
	<i>Carum carvi</i> L.	Karwiya	cultivé	feuilles	infusion	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	2.50

Famille	Nom scientifique	Nom vernaculaire	Statut	Parties utilisées	Modes de préparation	formes de consommation	Maladies traitées	CF (%)
Asteraceae	<i>Anthemis nobilis</i> L.	Camomille	spontané	fleurs	infusion	oral	Ballonnement	17.50
	<i>Artemisia herba-alba</i> Asso	Chih	spontané	partie aérienne	infusion	orale	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Vers intestinaux Nausées	20
	<i>Artemisia absinthium</i> L.	Chehiba	cultivé	partie aérienne	infusion	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Vers intestinaux	2.50
	<i>Saussurea costus</i> (Falc.) Lipschitz.	El Kast Elhindi	cultivé	écorce	décoction	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Maladies des glandes attachées au système digestif	2.50
Fabaceae	<i>Senna alexandrina</i> Mill.	Sena mekki	cultivé	graines	décoction	oral	Constipation	7.50
	<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i> L.	El kharoub	spontané	fruits	décoction	oral	Ulcère gastroduodénal Troubles gastro-intestinaux	10
	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i> L.	Ark sous	cultivé	racines	décoction	oral	Ulcère gastroduodénal	7.50
	<i>Trigonella Folnumgraecum</i> L.	Halba	cultivé	graines	décoction	oral	Ulcère duodénal Perte de poids	5
Lamiaceae	<i>Marrubium vulgare</i> L.	Merioua	spontané	feuilles	infusion	oral	Ballonnement Diarrhée	10
	<i>Lavandula stoechas</i> L.	Khezama	spontané	Partie aérienne	infusion	oral	Ballonnement Constipation	10
	<i>Melissa officinalis</i> L.	El milissa	cultivé	feuilles	infusion	oral	Ballonnement	10
	<i>Mentha spicata</i> L.	Naanaa	cultivé	Partie aérienne	infusion	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Gaz intestinaux	10
	<i>Mentha pulegium</i> L.	Fliou	cultivé	Partie aérienne	infusion	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Vomissement Diarrhée	7.50
	<i>Thymus algeriensis</i> Boiss. & Reut.	Zaatar	spontané	Partie aérienne	infusion	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	12.50
	<i>Salvia officinalis</i> L.	Miramia	cultivé	feuilles	infusion	oral	Ballonnement Diarrhée	2.50
	<i>Teucrium polium</i> L.	Jeaida	spontané	Partie aérienne	décoction	oral	Ulcère gastroduodénal	10
	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> L.	Iklil Eljabal	spontané	partie aérienne	décoction	oral	Gaz intestinaux Troubles gastro-intestinaux Vers intestinaux	6
	<i>Origanum Majorana</i> L.	Marda-kouche	cultivé	feuilles	décoction	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Inflammation de la bouche	2.50

Famille	Nom scientifique	Nom vernaculaire	Statut	Parties utilisées	Modes de préparation	formes de consommation	Maladies traitées	CF (%)
	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> L.	El Hbak	cultivé	feuilles	infusion	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	2.50
Zingiberaceae	<i>Zingiber Officinale</i> Roscoe	Zenjabil	cultivé	rhizome	décoction	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Vomissement Nausées	7.50
	<i>Curcuma longa</i> L.	Korkom	cultivé	rhizome	Poudre	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	2.50
Lauraceae	<i>Laurus nobilis</i> L.	Rend	spontané	feuilles	infusion	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Ballonnement	5
Lythraceae	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> L.	Hanna	cultivé	feuilles	infusion	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	2.50
Oleacea	<i>Olea europaea</i> L.	Zabouj	spontané	feuilles	infusion	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux Constipation	7.50
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus halepensis</i> Mill.	Taida	spontané	écorce	décoction	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	15
Puniraceae	<i>Punica granatum</i> L.	Romane	cultivé	fruits	décoction	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	32.50
Rununculaceae	<i>Nigella sativa</i> L.	Haba baraka	cultivé	graines	poudre		Ballonnement Hémorroïdes	2.50
Linaceae	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i> L.	Kitane	cultivé	graines	infusion	oral	Anorexie Troubles gastro-intestinaux	5
Myrtaceae	<i>Myrtus communis</i> L.	Rihane	spontané	feuilles	décoction	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	12.50
Rhamnaceae	<i>Ziziphus Lotus</i> (L.) Lam.	Sedra	spontané	fruits	poudre	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	5
Poaceae	<i>Avena sativa</i> L.	Choufane	cultivé	graines	poudre	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	5
Cactaceae	<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i> (L.) Mill.	Hindia	cultivé	fruits	décoction	oral	Diarrhea Hémorroïdes	5
Cupressaceae	<i>Juniperus phoenicea</i> L.	Arar	spontané	partie aérienne	décoction	oral	Troubles gastro-intestinaux	20

Sources: Auteurs, 2025

Statut des espèces

D'après la figure 3, on constate que les plantes cultivées sont plus utilisées pour le traitement des maladies digestives (57.50%) par rapport aux plantes spontanées bien que les populations croient davantage au pouvoir des plantes spontanées dans la guérison des maladies que les plantes cultivées (Fig. 3). Cette situation est le résultat des sécheresses prolongées, de la désertification et de l'action anthropique qui sont responsables de la dégradation de la végétation dans

la région d'étude. À cet effet la population s'oriente vers les plantes cultivées vendues chez les herboristes pour se soigner.

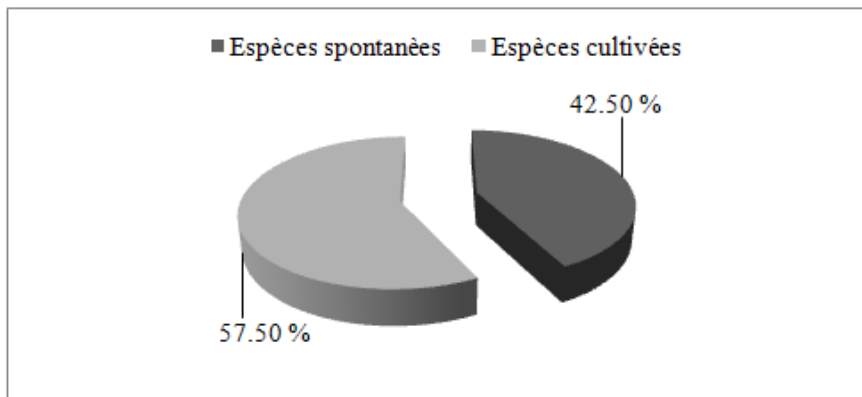


Figure 3. Statut des espèces recensées. Source : Auteurs, 2025

Parties utilisées

Il ressort d'après nos enquêtes que les feuilles sont les plus utilisées avec 27.50%, suivie des graines avec 25%. La partie aérienne est potentiellement utilisée avec un taux de 22.50%. Les fruits sont utilisés à raison de 10%.

D'autres organes, tels que l'écorce et les rhizomes, les racines et les fleurs sont représentés respectivement avec 5 et 2.50% (Fig. 4).

Les feuilles, les graines et la partie aérienne prédominent dans les remèdes traditionnelles, cela s'explique par la facilité et la rapidité avec lesquelles ces organes sont collectés et leur abondance par rapport aux autres parties végétatives (Khajuria *et al.*, 2021).

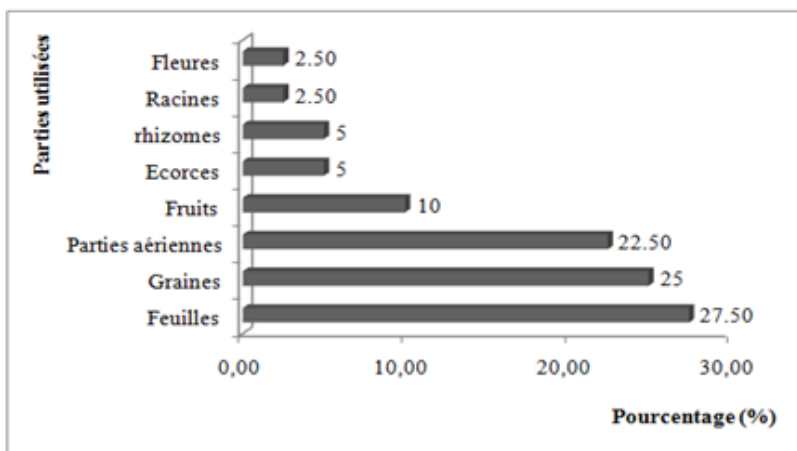


Figure 4. Parties utilisées. Source: Auteurs, 2025

Modes de préparation et forme de consommation

La décoction est le mode de préparation le plus fréquent chez la population de notre région d'étude, elle est utilisée avec 19 espèces, soit 47.50%. L'infusion est aussi très répandue avec 16 espèces, soit un pourcentage de 40%. Enfin, le mode de la poudre n'est utilisé qu'avec 5 espèces, ce qui donne un taux de 12.50% (Fig.5). La forme orale est la seule méthode de consommation des remèdes préparés, puisqu'il s'agit de traiter des maladies internes.

Généralement en Afrique, la décoction et l'infusion sont les modes de préparation les plus appréciées (Meddour *et al.*, 2022). Ces modes de préparation sont préférés par les guérisseurs pour traiter surtout les pathologies internes. En outre, Morilla *et al.* (2019) expliquent que la décoction et l'infusion consistent à faire bouillir des matières végétales ce qui permet de libérer leurs constituants actifs.

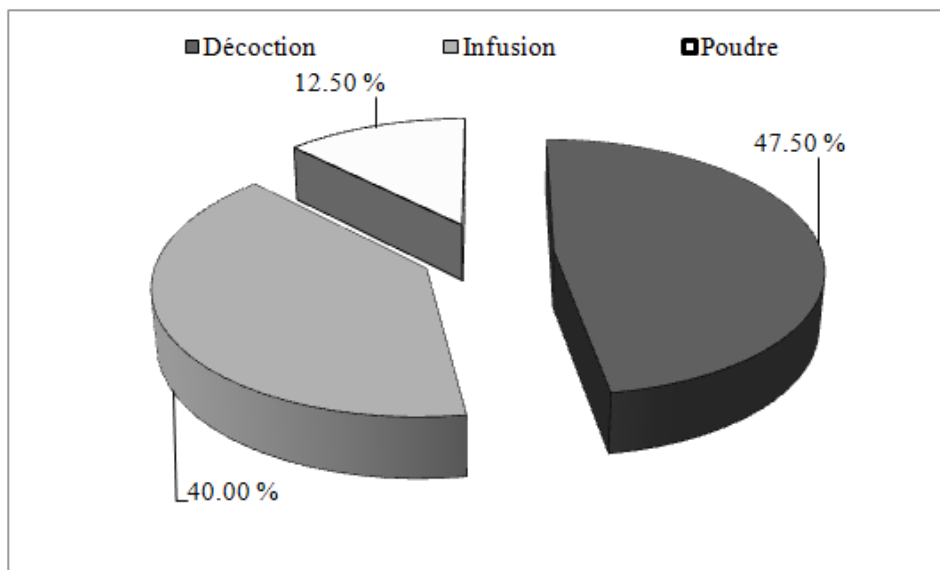


Figure 5. Modes de préparation. Source : Auteurs, 2025

Maladies traitées

Les 40 plantes médicinales recensées interviennent dans le traitement de diverses maladies relatives à l'appareil digestif. Il s'agit de traiter selon les participants aux enquêtes : les troubles gastro-intestinaux, le ballonnement, la diarrhée, l'ulcère gastroduodénal, la constipation, les hémorroïdes, les vers intestinaux, l'ulcère duodénal, la nausée, les maladies des glandes attachées au système digestif, la perte de poids, les gaz intestinaux, le vomissement, l'inflammation de la bouche, l'anorexie. Les troubles gastro-intestinaux et le ballonnement sont les pathologies les plus traitées.

Espèces les plus utilisées

D'après nos résultats (Table 2), *Punica granatum* L (32.50%), *Artemisia herba-alba* Asso (20%), *Juniperus phoenicea* L. (20%), *Anthemis nobilis* L. (17.50%), *Rosmarinus officinalis* L. (15%), *Pinus halepensis* Mill. (15%), *Pistacia lentiscus* L. (12.50%), *Myrtus communis* L. (12.50%), *Foeniculum vulgare* Mill (12.50%), *Thymus algeriensis* Boiss. & Reut. (12.50%), *Pimpinella anisum* L. (10%), *Ceratonia siliqua* L. (10%), *Marrubium vulgare* L. (10%), *Lavandula stoechas* L. (10%), *Melissa officinalis* L. (10%), *Mentha spicata* L. (10%), *Teucrium polium* L. (10%) sont les espèces les plus utilisées par les personnes enquêtées.

Nos résultats coïncident avec beaucoup d'études ethnobotaniques réalisées dans la région steppique algérienne. D'après Hadjadj *et al.* (2024c), les espèces les plus utilisées en médecine traditionnelle dans la région de Djelfa sont: *Juniperus phoenicea* L., *Pistacia lentiscus* L., *Teucrium polium* L., *Pinus halepensis* Mill., *Thymus algeriensis* Boiss. et Reult. (73%), *Artemisia herba-alba* Asso, *Rosmarinus officinalis* L.

Pour la population rurale de la région de Djebel Aissa (Région de Naâma), les espèces les plus populaires présentant une fréquence de citation élevée sont: *Rosmarinus officinalis* L. *Thymus algeriensis* Boiss. et Reut., *Juniperus phoenicea* L., *Artemisia herba-alba* Asso (Hadjadj *et al.*, 2019).

Dans la région de Laghouat, les valeurs les plus élevées de la fréquence de citation ont été observées pour *Artemisia herba-alba* Asso, *Rosmarinus officinalis* L., *Juniperus phoenicea* L. (Benlarbi *et al.*, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Malgré les progrès de la médecine moderne, la médecine traditionnelle reste un moyen très fréquent pour traiter les maladies humaines dans la région steppique algérienne. Durant cette recherche, nous avons recensés 40 plantes médicinales appartenant principalement aux familles des Lamiaceae, Apiaceae, Fabaceae et Asteraceae. Parmi ces espèces, il ressort que *Punica granatum* L., *Artemisia herba-alba* Asso, *Juniperus phoenicea* L., *Anthemis nobilis* L., *Rosmarinus officinalis* L., *Pinus halepensis* Mill, *Pistacia lentiscus* L., *Myrtus communis* L., *Foeniculum vulgare* Mill., *Thymus algeriensis* Boiss. & Reut., *Pimpinella anisum* L., *Ceratonia siliqua* L., *Marrubium vulgare* L., *Lavandula stoechas* L., *Melissa officinalis* L., *Mentha spicata* L., *Teucrium polium* L sont les plus utilisées.

Des études phyto-chimiques complémentaires basées sur l'identification des principaux composés bioactifs des plantes recensées seront nécessaires pour éviter les effets pouvant mettre la santé des consommateurs en danger.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest concerning the publication of this article.

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THE AFFLICTIVE JOURNEY OF THOMAS HARDY'S *TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES* THROUGH COMMUNIST ALBANIA

ENKELEJDA MALAJ*

Abstract: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is the only major novel written by Thomas Hardy to have been translated into the Albanian language and published during Communist Albania. In view of the strict policy of censorship of almost all “*regressive*” national and Western literature, for over forty years, and the systematic Party surveillance of Albania's literary environment, its publication in 1973 constitutes an interesting breakaway. This paper will look into some of the possible reasons behind such a concession, quite possibly related to Hardy's realistic themes, as well as shed some light on the life of the novel's Albanian translator Bujar Doko and its editor Eqerem Biba, whose political standing contributed to the novel's difficult journey through Communist Albania. Furthermore, the paper will present archival documents which confirm that despite the fact that Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* converged with certain socialist realism themes and sustained notions of worldwide internationalism, other political considerations would emerge as decisive for its eventual publication, banning and limited circulation, just a few years after its publication, reconfirming the unpredictability of the cultural and literary environment, as well the frequent disregard of literary merit, historical accuracy or even logic of continuity during Albania's Communist era.

Keywords: Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Petro Marko, Communist Albania, propaganda, censorship

INTRODUCTION

From its early years in power, the Communist Party of Albania made it clear that it was intent on overthrowing all forms of pre-revolutionary traditional national values, concepts, literature and art. As early as 1948, the Albanian communist apparatus engineered and upheld a methodical policy of book censorship with an unyielding meticulousness as regards the determining factors of banning a book or an author, either due to the messages conveyed, or simply because of the translator's or editor's name and standing, as our study case will support hereinbelow. This radical policy of censorship and close surveillance of the literary environment lasted for nearly 50 years, creating a general culture of fear and volatility in the country.

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Political theorists have long elaborated the concept of political culture, expounding the interinfluencing nature of politics and culture, and helping us understand how political regimes commit to transforming the cultural context of nations and societies, shaping new cultures and new citizens, all to the ultimate goal of consolidating their own political power (Almond, Verba, 1963). From this perspective, it can easily be assumed that, upon resuming power, all governments need to assert the newness they represent in the political and institutional life of a country. This necessity was particularly and visibly acute among the Eastern European communist countries, which coming out of the Second World War found themselves submersed into a new non-conventional war: the Cold War. As a war against capitalism and everything it represented, the Cold War comprised diverse aspects of “psychocultural ways” of thought and behaviour (Tucker, 1973, pp. 173–190). It is widely accepted that among the few variations in the Eastern bloc countries, Albania experienced a type of communism that “leaned towards the end of the spectrum, towards more authoritarian forms” (White, 1984, pp. 351–365). A historical Albanian National Archives and National Library exhibition in 2020 displayed a number of formerly secret and confidential documents confirming the outrageously systematic firm control of the Albanian Communist Party over every single book, author, periodical and publication for several decades, whether published before or after their coming to power (Dedaj, 2020; Euronews, 2020).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The scope of this paper is not to look into these matters from a political science point of view, but rather, from a literary, historical and cultural anthropology perspective, to highlight the immense impact politics can have on the cultural and literary context of a country and the measures used to that end in the case of Albania. Various historical official documents, periodicals and digital archival sources were consulted to bring relevant facts into light, resulting in observations on the nature of communist propaganda and censorship policy in Communist Albania during 1944–1991, through the application of qualitative methods. With a particular focus on Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, the paper sets off to argue that Hardy’s naturalistic inclinations and underlying political messages, converging with contemporaneous communist propaganda goals in Albania, could have provided some propaganda expediency, eventually allowing for the first ever Albanian publication of *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* in 1973.

One of the first unequivocal attacks on all pre-existing national and cultural ethos of Albania took place on 27th March 1948, when a decision issued by the so-called People’s Court of Tirana was published in the *Bashkimi* newspaper. Quite insanely, the court decision lists hundreds of works that were immediately banned throughout Albania, heralding the subsequent war on art, literature and free ideas, which would radically influence our country’s culture and way of life in an obliterating and detrimental way to at least two generations. The above court

decision maintained that a long list of books and several periodicals were dangerous to the society, because:

“...they do not contribute to the education and development of our people, but on the contrary, they are an obstacle and only serve our enemies... being incompatible with the new spirit of democracy, the will of the masses, the spirit of fraternity with the progressive peoples and other new democracies” (Gazeta *Bashkimi*, 1948).

It publicly paved the way for the subsequent extensive campaign of persecution and imprisonment of numerous renowned intellectuals and writers, reasoning that as products of a reactionary and bourgeois ideology, both the works and their authors deserved appropriate condemnation: “... We condemned them during the war we fought and we are condemning them again through our work”. (Gazeta *Bashkimi*, 1948).

Henceforth, a persistent campaign of branding numerous Albanian and international authors as dangerous and enemies of the people followed, including eminent writers like Alighieri, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Hemingway and Remarque. This would be just the first action among cycles of systematic directives and orders issued by relevant institutions up until the 90's, periodically ordering complete banning of authors and their works, or even works of translators and editors, classifying them into reserved or very reserved funds; all based on vigilantly developed and implemented policies and guidelines. A number of archival sources reveal the centralised control over all foreign literature, artistic and other, and the constant meticulous measures to ensure both bottom-up and top-down control throughout the country, materializing what Sue Curry Jansen calls “regulatory censorship”, as a first step towards a more authoritarian approach towards all art and literature. And in line with the concept of regulatory censorship, while “rules and conventions of censorship” would change periodically, “censorship remained an embedded phenomenon” for several decades (Jansen, 1988, p. 8). By the 70's, the initial “regulatory censorship” had transformed into “constitutive or existential censorship”, whose “insidious influence” had extended to all forms of human communication and, certainly, art and literature (Jansen, 1988, p. 8).

To illustrate the above, let us look into an excerpt from a 1973 report on the criteria of foreign literature (including artistic literature) entering Albania, that the then Minister for Education and Culture addressed to the Central Committee of the Labour Party. The report affirms the necessity to control the risk of foreign literature influences and for having dispatched:

“...communications to all regional education and culture sections and main libraries of Tirana, instructing libraries to keep all political and social foreign literature in reserved filing cabinets, to be borrowed by specialists of appropriate profiles, only, and under the *control* of the library directorate *at all times*. Also, education and culture sections are instructed to periodically control the use of such literature”. (Doc. No. 1245, of 30.04.1973. Source: CSARA. F. 511, Y 1973, Fol. 120, p./pp. 1-8)



Figure 1: Doc. No. 1245, of 30.04.1973, *On the criteria of foreign literature entering our country*.
Source: CSARA (Central State Archives of the Republic of Albania), F. 511, Y 1973, Fol. 120.

Ministries made sure that it became common practice to control all inflow of foreign literature, classified as either *progressive* or *reactionary*, the first implying anything promoting the communist ideology and socialist realism, while the latter everything that did not fit in that box. Hence, while almost all western literature was branded as regressive, the publication of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (Albanian: *Tesi i d'Erbervilëve: Një grua me karakter të kulluar, e paraqitur me vërtetësi*) in 1973, by the state-owned Naim Frashëri Publishing House constitutes an interesting breakaway, which merits some contemplation, as to the reasons that could have enabled such a concession.

Published in Victorian England in 1891, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* narrates the tragic fate of the pure and innocent Tess, whose virtue, dignity and life is mercilessly sacrificed by a number of factors and actors, human, social, divine and cosmic: the exploitative Alex d'Urbervilles, the selfish and cowardly Angel Clare, the irresponsible and ignorant parents, a hypocrite and judging society, unfortunate conditions of poverty, divine indifference and a cruel naturalistic universe. The novel does not communicate explicit political or ideological messages, but it appears that Hardy's realism in denouncing social injustice, the poverty of the English peasantry, cruel working conditions, as well as his positive depiction and

vindication of good simple people *versus* the callousness of the capitalist society, may have served communist propaganda, being interpreted as progressive calls from a Western writer to establish a new world order.

On the other hand, Hardy's naturalistic worldview, which made him question traditional religions, as he was unable to justify the tragedies of the innocent and the virtuous, and divine indifference towards such tragedies, was more than welcome in communist Albania, the only self-proclaimed atheistic country in the world. *Tess's* tragedy was purposefully construed as the tragedy of the innocent destitute individual in the *cruel capitalist world*, rather than the tragedy of the virtuous in an intrinsically ruthless and exploitative world, which was Hardy's naturalistic and humanistic intention.

In fact, the *Foreword* to the 1973 publication of *Tesi i d'Erbervilëve: Një grua me karakter të kulluar, e paraqitur me vërtetësi* confirms how communist authorities wanted readers to understand Hardy's novels. The *Foreword* is anonymous. Two explanations may be offered here. First, it could be explained through the collective *versus* individual approach in communist Albania, implying that the collective perspective always superseded the redundant individual perspective. Another explanation could be that the *Foreword* was simply introduced from another publication review in some Eastern bloc country and the author's name was simply superfluous. Whatever the case, the unnamed *Foreword* clearly intends to communicate to the readership that the opinions formulated in it are not individual opinions, but Party-inspired guidelines.

The *Foreword* portrays Hardy as a writer, who in the midst of England's social and economic crisis, as well as "the great decadence in bourgeois art and literature" is able to give readers "...a manifestation of the falsity of the liberal ideology", as he writes against the "growing political reactionary ideas" and courageously protests against the "cynical morality of the oppressors and the cruel bourgeois civilisation"; all because "he knew that capitalism is the enemy of people's happiness". He is praised for denouncing the evils of capitalism, for his realism in portraying social injustice, hypocrisy of social relations, religious snobbery, bourgeois immorality, the poverty of the English peasants, their cruel working conditions, the tragic fate of the English peasantry in the development process of capitalism, as well as for the benevolence he shows towards the "victims of capitalism".

"By the end of the last century, in the midst of reactionary conservative politics and cultural bourgeois crisis, the English writer Thomas Hardy courageously raised his voice in defence of humanism and genuine conceptual art. He rose as a protester and denouncer of evil, enraged by the hypocrisy and cynical morality of the oppressors of the cruel bourgeois civilisation. Reflecting on the history of the English rural areas, the tragedies of the English peasantry, expropriated by landowners and rural bourgeoisie, Hardy showed a benevolent attitude towards the victims of capitalism, the common people drowned in poverty and condemned to a life of half-starvation". (*Tesi i d'Erbervilëve*, Shtëpia Botuese Naim Frashëri. 1973. Parathënje, p/pp. 3–16).

Reading the above, it is easy to see that viewing *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* from such a perspective was expedient to highlight the suggested contrast between the cruelty of the capitalist society and the propagated communist reality, which constituted the essence of the war between the capitalist West and the communist East.

An extensive embedment of the typical propaganda and terminology is more than apparent throughout the *Foreword*, along with a persistent necessity to dig for imaginary linkages between the novel's messages and communist ideology. William Morris and the British Socialism, the growing displeasure of the broad rural and urban masses, and the reading of progressive literature are all enumerated as factors that shaped a revolutionary Thomas Hardy. Though purposeful, the attempt to present Hardy in a strong revolutionary light is truly far-fetched and simplistic, just as the attempt to sketch him as the representational writer, who voices the misfortunes of an oppressed class in a capitalist world, even though Hardy does not bring the tragedy of a given class in this or other novels; instead, he portrays the tragedy of the virtuous and kind individual in a chaotic and unkind universe. Hardy did indeed show an inclination towards socialistic themes (Tomalin, 2006, p. 64) and entertained socialistic ideas during his university days (Pite, 2006, p. 137), but he *never* committed politically. He strongly believed that he needed *neutrality* in his pursuits for equality, affirming that, as a writer, he was a supporter of *intrinsic* human rights, rather than a supporter of any political ideology (Flynn, 2016, pp. 56–65). In spite of that, we see a confirmation of the fact that propaganda goals superseded literary merit or even historical accuracy in communist Albania. Sufficiently enough, Hardy's representation of class and social problems in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, projecting an overall naturalistic hostile attitude of the capitalist society and divine forces against the unprivileged individual, converged with the communist doctrine for social equality, the need for a new system in the West and the atheistic worldview, which must have sustained the novel's chances of passing through censorship lenses.

However, authorisation for publication did not imply exemption from censorship; on the contrary, censorship of foreign authors was mandatory and a common practice, as contemporary official documents demonstrate beyond any doubt. Another 1972 report, pictured below, on the observance of foreign literature publication criteria by the state publishing houses underscores that “only progressive literature is helpful for the revolutionary education of the masses” and that such criteria were determined by the Party and comrade Enver Hoxha himself. (Head of Publication's Report of 19.02.1972, *On the observance of publication criteria of foreign literature, compatible with our country's conditions and needs*. Source: CSARA. F. 511, Y 1972, Fol. 167, p./pp. 1–23)

The 1972 report confirms that Party guidelines commanded that all foreign literature had to undergo the so-called “ideological cleansing”, so that they could be made “entirely appropriate” for the Albanian “conditions and society”. Our comparative study of the original text and the translated version into Albanian showed that *Tesi i d'Erbervilëve* was subjected to the practice of partial censorship and “ideological cleansing”.

Chapter 16 of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, for example, contains a few paragraphs, in which Tess experiences a natural inclination to believe in the Good God, and a few pagan superstitions blended with the traditional Christian faith, she was brought up in. While there is no censuring of biblical quotes and references, when Hardy is critical of God's indifference, vengefulness and certain religious doctrines, the opposite happens when Tess's natural tendency to believe in a loving and compassionate God is described in positive terms. This sincere moment of any human to believe in some higher spiritual entity, beyond the material world, was unacceptable to the communist atheistic ideology. Therefore, nearly a whole page in chapter 16 is entirely wiped out in the Albanian version of *Tesi i d'Erbervilëve*, as a confirmation of the strict practice of "ideological cleansing".

In other respects, "regressive literature" was rather equivocal and a clearly defined set of criteria was not in place to determine the chances of eventual publication or banning of a literary work. Moreover, since the existing regulations could easily and instantaneously overturn, shaping a truly volatile social and literary environment, it is important to look into other reasons that could have contributed to the novel's publication, besides the ideological aspect of its messages. Our study shows that the message of any novel was not the only significant criteria for publication and free circulation in communist Albania in the 60's and 70's and that other political aspects could outweigh them.

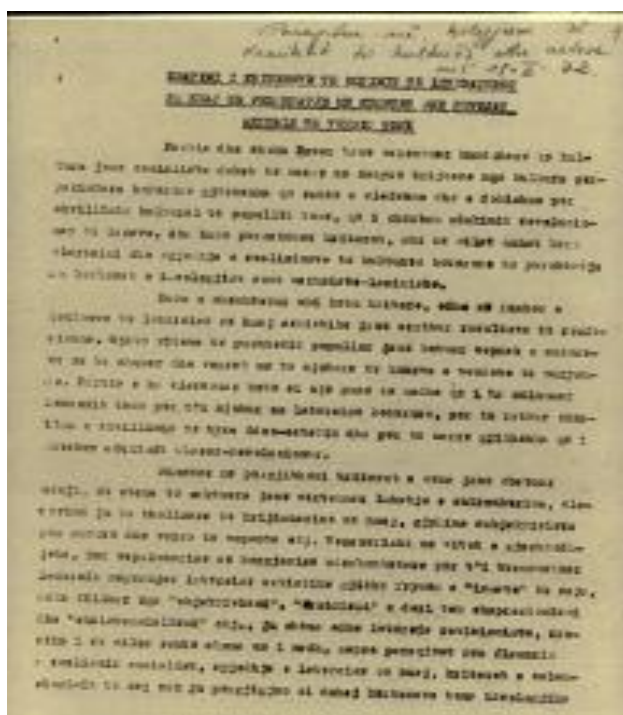


Figure 2: Report of 19.02.1972, *On the observance of publication criteria of foreign literature, compatible with our country's conditions and needs*. Source: CSARA, F. 511, Y 1972, Fol. 167

For the sake of demonstrating the truly strict and unstable nature of the Albanian literary environment and censorship, the case of Petro Marko's novel *Qyteti i Fundit* (*The Last City*), written and published in 1960, is brought up here for comparison. Even though Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and Marko's *Qyteti i Fundit* are set in different historical, cultural and social contexts, and written decades apart, we observe a number of correspondences, which highlight the humanistic and naturalistic approach in both writers. Marko's novel tells the story of Leka, a decent communist youth, who is able to notice a spiritual and emotional virginity in Ana Maria Monti, the miserable unfortunate Italian prostitute, allowing himself to develop feelings for her, contrary to Party guidelines and communist morals, which compel him to stay away from the defeated Italian enemy and the *fallen woman* of the West. In the tragedy of the innocent woman, Leka identifies a victim of human greed, lust and exploitation from both her family members and former lover, similar to what we observe in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.

Still, Marko's novel was met with an entirely different attitude. *Qyteti i Fundit* was heavily criticised for breaking away from the socialist realism schematic guidelines (Marko, 2000, pp. 506–507). Marko's *Qyteti i Fundit* was branded reactionary, naturalistic, and banned from 1960 until the fall of communism in the 90's, whereas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* was considered publishable in 1973, even though it manifests stronger naturalistic features and entirely lacks the explicit communist themes of Marko's novel.

Going back to the 1972 report, quoted below, we come across a more pragmatic explanation to the conceded publication of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in 1973.

"In the struggle of implementing sound ideological criteria, we have observed the emergence of a "better safe, than sorry" inhibiting trend. Particularly, following Comrade Enver's (Enver Hoxha) speech on March 7, 1968, growing fear and hesitation has greatly reduced the number of published works. Thus, while before 1968 the foreign literature publishing office managed to publish up to 20 such works per year, 11 were published in 1968, 6 in 1969 and only 7 in 1970". (Report of 19.02.1972, *On the observance of publication criteria of foreign literature, compatible with our country's conditions and needs*. Source: CSARA, F. 511, Y 1972, Fol. 167, pp. 1–23)

Thus, the report confirms two practical reasons that helped the publication process of Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, in spite of possible ideological inconsistencies with the official socialist realism.

First, the report confirms that out of 1000 works published in communist Albania from 1945–1969, more than 90% of them were predominantly classics by Russian-Soviet, French, Greek and Latin authors, emphasizing a growing *need* to identify other more contemporary, popular and progressive authors from other countries, unknown to the Albanian readership.

Second, there was a 65% fall in the publication of foreign literature works from 1968–1970, which rendered the ideological propaganda need to bring new authors to the Albanian readership from Western countries, even more acute. The fact that authors like Hardy dared to denounce the evils of capitalism,

the poverty of peasantry and working classes, just like their Eastern colleagues, helped promote the idea of internationalism to the broad masses, feeding them a sense of unity and commonness among all peoples and oppressed classes all over the world.

*Tesi i d'Erbervilëve: Një grua me karakter të kulluar, e paraqitur me vërtetësi*¹ was published in 15.000 copies in 1973, citing Bujar Doko as the translator and Eqerem Biba as the editor, marking the beginning of another stage in its journey through Communist Albania. It is rather curious to observe that the tragic vibes of Hardy's novel seem to have projected a shadow of misfortune on the lives of its translator and editor, just as on the fate of the Albanian publication itself.

Bujar Doko was a rather obscure name for decades, even though a true personality in the field of classical literary translations. The digital Archive of Crimes and Victims of Communism in Albania sheds light on his obscure life and fate². Tried and convicted to 5 years in prison by the Military Court of Tirana in April 1946, for having supposedly participated in a coup against the government, he was branded an enemy to the communist government at the young age of 21 (*Source*: AISKK, F 1. V 2013. D 5/1. Fl.255–256). An imprisoned well-educated young man, he was forced to join the Prison Office of Translations, established in 1945 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Ndoja, 2013, p. 140). The Prison Office of Translations comprised about 100 imprisoned intellectuals, enslaved and obliged to anonymously translate a vast bulk of literary and non-literary works into Albanian. Though pardoned a year later, his political conviction meant a lifelong condemnation to imposed obscurity and surveillance. Declassified authentic documents dating back to 1978 confirm that even 32 years after his imprisonment, Bujar Doko was still among those intellectuals who were constantly surveyed by the State Security Services (Kaloçi, 2015), even though he continued to translate for publishing houses, sometimes anonymously and sometimes not (Ndoja, 2013, p. 137).

While Bujar Doko carried *the letter of shame* for decades, Eqerem Biba, the novel's editor, born in Tirana and educated in Florence, was quite a well-known personality of the Naim Frashëri Publishing House. A respected and industrious translator, Eqerem Biba is known for having mostly translated authors from the Italian and Russian languages, from Gianni Rodari to Fyodor Dostoevsky, and for being the editor of a great body of Albanian translations from international authors. But, paranoia, constant doubt and new "enemies" were as common as dirt in communist Albania, and nobody was beyond doubt (Hamzai, 2019). In 1980, Eqerem Biba was suddenly arrested. In his autobiographic novel *Illusions in the Drawer*, the well-known Albanian novelist, Fatos Kongoli (2010, pp. 172–174) recollects the general astonishment and concern he experienced upon learning that "the noble and, always,

¹*Author's Note*: The title of the 1973 Albanian publication, literally translated as: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A pure woman, truthfully presented*.

²*Author's note*: The online Archive of Crimes and Victims of Communism in Albania is an initiative to establish a digital archive of Communist Albania crimes and victims, based on archival documentation, interviews and testimonies. kujto.al | Arkiva Online e Viktimave të Komunitizmit në Shqipëri

CONCLUSIONS

The coercion of imposing psychocultural measures in Communist Albania spanned from 1944–1991, with arbitrary measures continuously packaged and falsely propagated as the will of the people. The great goal of “building the socialist society” in Albania, which would pretentiously constitute the antithesis of the evil and decadent capitalist standards and values, was presented to the people as the high moral ground that claimed to justify not only the imposition of new communist standards and the communist ideal, but also innumerable crimes and attacks against the lives and work of thousands of Albanian intellectuals, resulting into the eventual spiritual impoverishment of contemporary and later generations in Albania.

Our study demonstrates that contemporaneous propaganda permeated any literary activity, including literary reviews, and that some of Hardy's realistic themes in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* must have secured its translation and publication in the 70's, in the midst of a strict policy of censorship on all “regressive” Western literature. The *Foreword* to the 1973 Albanian publication of *Tesi i d'Erbervilëve*, the only major Hardy novel to have been translated and published during communist Albania, confirms the strained effort to present Hardy as more revolutionary and radical than he ever was, exaggerating his socialistic leanings and overlooking all other aspects of Hardy's naturalistic and humanistic convictions, which transcend political ideologies.

Hardy's justification and defence of the underprivileged individual in an unjust and hostile world, where even God is indifferent, concurs with the communist doctrine for social equality, atheism and the greater goal of building a new world. Hardy came from the *other* world, the West, hence, his protests against crimes committed in the West sustained propaganda goals on the evils of capitalism, proletarian internationalism, and promoted the ideal of unity among all oppressed peoples and societies throughout the world.

However, the study confirms, through a number of official documents, that a pragmatic need for publications from western writers, must have been the main factor that decidedly secured the publication of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, rather than the novel's messages, alone. Similarities in the realistic and naturalistic themes and messages between Hardy's novel and Petro Marko's *Qyteti i Fundit*, and the distinctly different attitude of the publishing authorities towards them, further support our findings.

Our conclusions reconfirm the volatile nature of the literary and political environment in the 60's and 70's in Communist Albania, and the fact that, in spite of Hardy's realistic messages, the political standing of the translator and of the editor affected the novel's journey, determining its publication, banning and restricted circulation. Consequently, Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* was not destined to escape the tragedy of communist censorship and misfortunes. Ill-fated to have been translated by the political convict Bujar Doko and edited by Eqerem Biba, *Tesi i d'Erbervilëve* had its own share of painful communist adventures. Construed as a novel that sustained the notions of internationalism and worldwide

call for a new world, it circulated freely from 1973 until the spring of 1980, when Eqerem Biba's political conviction delivered a fatal blow. From 1980 – 1986 it was part of the Reserved Fund, marking the end of its further free circulation, subsequent re-publications or publication of any other major novels by Thomas Hardy until the fall communism in the early 90's.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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2. All translations from Albanian into English, cited in this paper, are performed by the author.

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APPROACHING THE OTHERNESS: AN INCURSION INTO THE ANDEAN CULTURE

IOANA-IULIANA SPERIATU^{1,2}

Abstract: This paper is based on a practice exercise of the anthropological approach of the Otherness during my individual travel to Peru. From the I-tourist to the I-apprentice-anthropologist, this reflexive and self-referential exercise revealed to me *the fascination of difference* that Professor Vintilă Mihăilescu elaborated a decade ago (Mihăilescu, 2014). The pretext of this exercise was a trip I took in November 2023 to Peru – Cusco region, with the destination of Machu Picchu (UNESCO, 1983). By pre-setting the context of my anthropological exploration as one with: 1) the aim of practicing direct observation and participatory observation, 2) the fieldwork of the cultural area of Cusco, Peru and 3) the purposefulness of writing an ethnological journal, the following paper includes notes and stories that are based on the ethnographic photo-journal that I partially textualized here, as well as a (possible) interpretation of my learnings during Machu-Picchu experience.

Keywords: observation, otherness, Cusco, cultural identity, identity strategies

THE ANTHROPOLOGY AS “THE PRACTICE OF WONDERING”

I love travel and explorers (...) here I am ready to tell the story of my expeditions.
(after Lévi-Strauss, 1968:19)

With the privilege I had to travel in Peru, the chance of direct and personal observation, in this case, of the apprentice-anthropologist, be she the undersigned, was something that I did not miss. Not being field research in the scientific sense (multiple limitations such as time and experience implied), my incursion into the Andean culture was a practical exercise of the anthropological exploration, a fieldwork orientation as a (pre)liminal (and pre-liminary) stage, for a (desirable, future) scientific fieldwork. It was an exercise of the ethnological/anthropological perspective, like a long [and arduous] instrumentation of wondering, as Professor Vintilă Mihăilescu once said (2017:96).

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² This paper was coordinated by Dr. Marin Constantin, Director of the Institute of Anthropology” Francisc I. Rainer” of the Romanian Academy and Associate Professor at the University of Bucharest; Romanian version of this paper was awarded at the BucharEST Student (BEST) Letters Colloquia, 2025

What particularly interested me was precisely this instrumentation of the wondering which, paradoxically, had in its center, not the object, but the subject of the wonder: the self, no matter its position: the I-tourist and/or the I-ethnologist/anthropologist. From the tourist's point of view, the "Machu Picchu experience" was that of *transposing* into the Andean cultural narrative (on which, as an ethnologist, I tried to constantly direct my lens), a precisely marketed narrative, built around a different culture (from the point of us, tourists – the strangers) diverse and often intriguing:

How is it that Peruvians have their own Inka Cola, different from the universal Coca Cola?, but, at the same time: Although they have plentiful vineyards, they do not have their own wine (pisco), but only a kind of wine distillate marketed as *pisco-sour*? or: What is the secret of the vibrant colors of their clothing? or: Why do some women wear a certain type of hat, with narrow brims, similar to the English men's model of the early 20th century?

On the other hand, from the anthropologist's point of view, the path from getting acquainted with what you already know to what you do not know yet (Mauss, 2003:24) was a *transformative* one. By directing my view at my behavior as observer, the contact with the different culture revealed, beyond a (quite) complicated series of anxieties, turmoil, self-control mechanisms and *ad-hoc* decisions, the triple positionality of human that: (1) lives as a body, in the sense of a physical bodily totality; (2) lives in the body, as a spirit that leads and represents human; (3) lives outside the body, as a total, reflective observer of the self. (Georgescu, in Ștefănuță (coord.) 2017: 127).

In both situations-role, tourist and anthropologist, this plurality of the self, from which I chose to focus my observation on the anthropology of the body, on one hand, and on the behavior of the observer, on the other hand, determined, as evident, the need to design, for the purpose of this exercise, of an ordering super-structure. As a tourist, I found myself immersed in a tourist-cultural experience built on the round-trip Cusco-Machu Picchu, in which the multi-modal *transportation* to the destination acted as the opening and closing formula in a fairy tale, as in a loop which is necessary to enter and, respectively, exit, in this case, the timeless space of Machu Picchu.

A pre-set and engaging (also accepted/ contracted) tourist cultural narrative followed a storytelling three-act structure:

1. (collective) hero/s (group/s of tourists), setting up (the itinerary) and missions (such as acclimatization),
2. actions / complications (such as untamed nature), as well as
3. the satisfying resolution/ close, full of memories to share with friends and family instantly online or face to face upon returning home.

The (pseudo-) hero tourist - me and, like me, any other tourist of different ethnicities (there were Romanians, Americans, Japanese as well as French), with common path (travel as space and time) - is isolated, but not alone or exposed to insecurity since all the elements of the universe [in this case, local guides and contractual international clauses] help her/him to overcome unpleasant situations

(Bîrlea, 1976). This familiarity with the tourism scenario brought a kind of predictability, which was not the case, on the other hand, for the anthropologist.

The anthropologist must search for the unsearchable, see the unseen, and wait, patiently, for the unexpected. Under these conditions, I must confess that I left home without a pre-conceived ethnographic scenario, just aiming to observe what is different and unexpected within, but especially, as much as possible, outside the (quite) restrictive spatial-temporal tourist route.

From the point of view of the anthropologist (still apprentice), the challenge came only upon my return home. Based on the principle of reciprocity, the travel-gift claimed its counter-gift, be that the *textual organization of the visible* (La Plantine, 2000). With the *transcription* of the experience, including here also the knowledge *e-motion*, the focus turned a completely different frames and details that the researcher needs to produce and elaborate. My journal is not *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term* – as is Malinowski's journal, published posthumously, in 1967, nor is it explicit in terms of the "sinuous process" of data obtaining, as is Lévi-Strauss model in *Sad Tropics* (1955) (apud. Mihăilescu, 2014:2). My journal is a statement of my own anthropological search, in which my wondering practice sought (the intentionality of the exercise) the *otherness* and the *suchness* (Mihăilescu, 2017), in this case in relation with the Andean culture, by including in the same equation wondering and reflexivity, questions and interpretations.

The following is part of my field-report journal which I developed as reflection of the cultural-tourist narrative model, with which it intertwines and from which, at the same time, it distances itself. The text must be correlated with its pretext (a short individual trip within the group of acquaintances), context (practical exercise of anthropological exploration), and limitations (e.g., the brief time).

THE SETTING UP

...you must be prepared to practice the wondering with a purpose. (...) "Going there" poses (...) certain problems before "being there". (Mihăilescu, 2007:96)

1.The object of the wondering: the difference. From the simple curiosity of the I-tourist to the practice of wondering of the I-anthropologist, the problem of difference is a permanent constant. I got (sort of) familiarity, diffused, and confused, from numerous references, mostly tourist-focused, that abound online. More questions arose on the way:

What differentiates Peruvians? Is that exceptional ecological diversity? (Molinie-Fioravanti, Andes, pp. 74–75 in Bonte, Izard (coord.), 1999) or unity in diversity which the Andean ethnics ingeniously *transposed* the landscape on their handmade fabrics? What about clothing? ceramics? gastronomy? Or their beliefs or state of *being*? And, in general, a certain primitivism of self-experience (Diaconu, 1946) that perpetuates the ethnic character? Or is it a certain receptivity specific to the observer and hence a certain approach?

To narrow the perspective, I focused my attention on two axes and two binomials:

1. Diversity: ethnic-ecological Andean diversity, and
2. Strategy: heritage-tourism cultural-identity construction.

There were certain missions I had first to address:

1.1. *The problem of Otherness: distance-proximity:*

Considering the anthropology at home that needs to place the object of study *at distance*, while the classic anthropology implies *distancing*, the latter allows for the refinement of the understanding of diversity as a difference of the Other (Mihăilescu, 2007:17–18). A *distant Other*, identified at the level of differences and similarities to the Self culture, confers the image of one's own cultural identity, knowing of the Other [being] also a learning of the Self which thus becomes the Other (Mihăilescu, 2007:108). But for the Otherness it is required to be neither similar, nor reduced at an asymmetrical relationship. In other words, for there to be a dialogue, there must be a level difference (Ferreol, 2005:19–20), and here the binomial *distance-proximity* can resolve this difference to a certain extent.

1.2. *The problem of subjectivity:*

Considering the same *at home – at distance* binomial, the ambivalence of the observer (outsider-insider) which is characteristic of the first case, “cancels the distance between the subject and the object of knowing” (Geană, 1997: 77–79), while in case of the anthropology of the distant Other, by trying to know the Other, the anthropologist plays his own methodology. (Mihăilescu, 2007:106). In both cases the ethnographic journal, as the working tool, remains suspended in the observer's subjectivity.

2. *Methodology:*

2.1. *A methodological problem: time, as a brief duration.*

Time, the classics would say, is the one that gives the measure of the observation and, respectively, of the thick description that the ethnography requires. But the short duration of the fieldwork is a problem even for the contemporary home anthropology (Fruntelată, in Ștefănuță (coord.), 2017; 35). Without being stressful, the entire Machu Picchu tourist-experience was rigorously set up (programmed), due to the massive tourists' cohorts curious to see the *preciousness of the Monument*. From the perspective of the hosts (including agents such as travel organizers), the heritage preservation combined with the sustainable strategy requires maximum efficiency. For the anthropologist, space and time are contextual assets for his/ her observation. Dilemmas arose while trying, in the context of exploration, to balance time efficiency with the need for detailed direct observation. There was no time for contemplation, but *precious time* for the anthropological view which reclaimed once again to be well instrumented.

2.2. *The (first) helper: Self-ethnography.*

Considering the context of my anthropological prospection, reflexivity on my personal experience as an observer of myself (self-introspection) was beneficial for

connecting to the new culture while exploring cultural anchors as differences and similarities.

2.3. *The (second) helper: the camera.*

With this limited situation, I found technology to be instrumental for my exercise. As the extension of human beings that have already entered ordinary everyday life, why not? - ethnology/ anthropology could mean "photographing time". (Frunțelată, in Ștefănuță (coord.), 2017:35). On the one hand, I needed to imprint the memory of people as they were there and then, with gestures, clothing, facial expressions, and so many details. From the I-tourist to the I-anthropologist I had to train myself not *to take photos* but *to look through the camera* as Mead and Bateson pioneering used photography and film in cultural anthropology (Jacknis, 1988:160–177). On the other hand, considering that the photography operates at the level of understanding of the photographer, I needed to address some issues: What "real life" frames should I focus through my camera (*ad-hoc*, there, in the middle of the fieldwork)? How should I select from the multitude of photo material that potentially would become the documentary source for a given moment?

2.3. *More dilemmas (and attempts to solve them):*

1) Is photography the image (imago) as magical or charming? How can you avoid it? I found the answer lying in the specialization of the ethnological image as an objectified tool;

2) If anthropology is a science of words (logos), then can photography (imago) be part of the former? Yes, to the extent that anthropology takes over and valorizes images, for their documentary potential, without overusing them, which is what I did here. Moreover, paraphrasing Professor Dr. Marin Constantin, this tense couple between the idea of logos and the idea of image and between the idea of the relevance of the word, respectively the epiphany of an image, can only be beneficial and progressive.

NOTES AND STORIES FROM MY JOURNAL

November 20, 2023, 10:37AM (Photo: Aerial view of the city of Cusco, before landing)

[The first mission] Orientation – *down-up, here-now*. Cusco city seen from above: fully crowded from the bottom up, on the verticality of the Andes, arid, burnt clay colored landscape. Compared to the humid climate and the dense fog over the sea [garúa] we experienced in Lima an hour ago upon take off, the weather in Cusco looks sunny, although large clouds are threateningly gathering from the mountains. *The problem of the difference in altitude*: All Cusco tourist guides recommend, allowing yourself patiently a gradual acclimatization. But, with few days here and now, I cannot afford this luxury myself. *The acclimatization testing*:...unknown and chaotic symptomatology, from the apparently inexplicable unusual yawning session

that suddenly engulfs (almost) everyone upon landing in Cusco, to the slow-motion, as if I am carrying the entire weight of the mountain in my backpack, not my small backpack in which I have packed-unpacked-and-repacked just the strictly-necessary... increasingly repeated breaks [these were not included on the tourist's objectives list], finally entered a café/tea house. Self-restored after a panacea-leaf-tea-unanimously-recommended-here I realized that the solution would have been a sun hat, not like usual one [as I am used to wearing in my own place and culture], but a "proper" one, with wide brims, like locals were wearing... *Helping elements*: practices and cures as acclimatization remedies – take it easy and patience as practices are not affordable in my case, so what about first aid cure? *Botega* [kind of pharmacy] recommended medicine, while café/ tea house, recommended tea [nn.: what else?]. The miraculous cures are coca-based such as infusions, chewing leaves or candy, then there is the alcohol, and, in severe cases, the oxygen [all this seemed to me as some kind of sign of the powers that the local-guides owned as bearers of knowledge]. *Dilemma*: home remedies or local remedies? *Solution*: I chose the local remedies hoping to succeed with just tea. [or not].

November 20, 2023, 1:30 PM (Photos: Journey from Cusco to Machu-Picchu)

[The immersion] About 400 km journey from Cusco to Aqua Caliente [the Machu Picchu Pueblo which is the closest town in proximity to the Inca Sanctuary] revealed the "vertical archipelago" (Molinie-Fioravanti, Andes, pp. 74–75 in Bonte, Izard (coord.), 1999). During this quite long journey, two moments particularly caught the attention. The first one was an ordinary life moment captured around a street corner while crossing the town of Chinchero (about 3700 meters above the sea level), less than half an hour from Cusco.



Photos. Life at a street corner in Chinchero, Cusco region

Cusco cultural area is the home, as I could observe there, of two distinct (pre-Inca) ethnic groups, namely: Quechua and Aymara populations. A certain preserved *rusticity* is characteristic for each of them which seemed to me to reflect that intentionality of the primitivizing of the experience of the self (Diaconu, 1946). In the absence of a writing system (see the power of orality; also see *quipu*), but with strong preserved traditions that everywhere are *common sense* (clothing,

occupations, from rudimentary agriculture to animal husbandry), these are models of surviving ethnicity. Further wondering: how did they succeed?

The second one was a short *belvedere break* at the summit point of the journey, near Chinchero town. The panoramic view revealed the perspective of what stands as a testimony of human-nature relationship.



Photo. Andean cultural landscape

The multilayered reality – the concrete one, rising vertically to high altitude and strongly anchored in my physical body's amplified perceptions – and the mythical one emerged once getting in Ollantaytambo (for changing transportation), was a mix experience. The departure ceremonial spectacularly performed by them - the *Inca heroes* (hosts - the chosen ones, from among the ethnic groups), even on such a cold heavy raining day as it was on that day, was only the starting point of the *procession* (towards the train station, and then inside the train) in which us, the strangers/tourists where immediately captured into a syncretic – music, dance, and storytelling – cultural narrative. The journey continued through the Amazonian forest till evening, when arriving at Machu Picchu Pueblo.



Photo. Multilayered reality: Journey to Machu Picchu as a ritual ceremony

November 22, 2023 – *A Day on the Cusco streets.*

[Continuity] Back to Cusco. Early morning, on Calle Carmen Bajo ...walking up the very narrow, cobblestone street to Plaza San Blas, from where the way continues to Carmen Alto. From one end to the other, the street has its charm with the little houses [from the local perspective these would be *common sense*] aligned on both sides of the street, like long carriages, whitewashed walls, mostly cracked, with wooden doors, shutters, and balconies, painted in blue. On the ground floor, small shops break the monotony of the walls: cafes, *botegas* or souvenir shops displaying [as a sign of a tourist convenience] on their doors open to the outside, towards the already narrow street, multi-colored ponchos, *chullos*, and, in general, local artisans' products. Tourists and locals, motorcycles, and cars share the same narrow street in the middle of the old city... [a story of continuity]

November 22, 2023: *Walking around Don M.' workshop*

[The story in exchange] In the middle of the workshop, quite dark and cold, crammed with fabrics, two looms occupied the small room. Leaning over the threads, surprisingly, a man was the one that was weaving. *Nuestra abuela tiene uno... ¿como se llama...? Telar! Telar es esto y esto también!* Replied the man who continued immediately visible annoyed-surprised-curious: *Tu abuela or abuelo? ¿De dónde eres?* He was as surprised as we were when seeing him weaving on his *telar*. Finding that in other countries, like in Romania, only women weave, revealed the twofold of the fascination of the difference. At that point, the man became keen to show his work from various fabrics (wood, not alpaca anymore) to final products such as rugs. He was specifically enthusiastic while explaining colored ancestral patterns, like Inca Way (named it in English!). He stressed his hard work by showing, using a tailor's tape measure, that he could only advance about 15 cm a day. Same as Granma who used to say: "about this palm size if I could weave today". We introduced ourselves, as if we were not two strangers anymore since we already had something to share...

November 22, 2023: *Chocolate chips - an Andean Story (excerpts)*

[The revealed Otherness] Eleven people gathered in the small chocolate workshop in the center of Cusco city: our group of six Romanians – five adults and Mica - our junior, a senior couple, "she-American", "he-Japanese", and three young American women, who arrived at the last minute, probably sheltering, like us, from the hail that had already covered the narrow street along the Inca Wall on which the Archbishop's Palace has been built upon.

The trainer, a young brunette Peruvian woman with small, round, black eyes, welcomes us with a curious greeting, neither in English nor in Spanish, but recognizable by her attitude. The trainer explains us that the greeting was in Quechua language and, she continues, we will embark on a multi-lingual: English/Spanish and Quechua sensory journey: *From Bin to Bar, Noqa Munakuyki cacao!* (I love cocoa!). We will also be going, we are told, to discover the secrets of chocolate, from the organic cocoa tree [nn: grown spontaneously in the Cusco area

rainforest] to the handmade and self-customized chocolate [nn: full autonomy and self-help], as long as we follow the recipe [nn: the house rules]. The equipment is mandatory: bonnets and aprons (with traditional patterns incorporated into the visual place branding) as signs of our (ephemeral) trainee-chocolatiers position. With this first step towards our *transformation*, the atmosphere heats up: we take selfies, we exchange phones with each other for group photos, we introduce ourselves, joking, but being determined, for the next couple of hours, to reach the supreme chocolatier stage. (...) Cacao beans are roasting on the traditional bowl slow-heated. For a perfect result, the trainer continues, we must each mix in the *magic* bowl, saying on each turn: Noqa Munakuyki ...cacao! or any other word, suggestions given: Noqa Munakuyki cacao! Noqa Munakuyki Cusco! Noqa Munakuyki Quechua! [why not: Noqa Munakuyki Anthropology!] (...)

We are now going to prepare cocoa tea from the husks left over from the roasted beans [nothing is lost, everything is transformed]. Trainer explains that pre-Inca shamans used this tea for therapeutic purposes. We are all invited to pick the husks from the roasted beans, then to mix them in a hot water glass using a *molinillo*. When it comes to finally tasting the tea, the ceremony requires a toast: we toast together while raising our glasses in the four directions of the World [toast as ritual]: Hanan pacha! (for the World above), Kay pacha! (for this World, ours, in the middle), Uku pacha! (for the underworld, of those dead and those to be born), Khali kaq kachun! (for myself, as a micro-world, for my good health!) [I am trying to write down correctly these Quechuan phrases, please correct me if I am wrong!] (...)

Slowly but surely, we get to personalize our chocolates. Trainer just made room on the table for two large bowls full of chocolate chips: one bowl contains a single kind of chips: pink spicy (paprika) chips, while the other bowl contains a mix of chips in various colors and flavors: spicy pink (the same paprika), creamy white (vanilla), dark green (coconut), a kind of yellow-brown (mango) and other brown ones (which flavors I don't remember). Interesting, of course, the slightly spicy taste of the pink paprika chips...

At first, trainer explains, that the only flavor was aji/paprika, and only dealt with Spanish, five hundred years ago...

But how, in all this acculturation-enculturation continuum, did those pink chocolate chips keep their own place (bowl) unaltered? At that moment, the place branding that I have been thinking about since the tea and *molinillo*, makes sense to me. I feel inspired.

DISCUSSION

From my perspective, beyond efficient tourist practices (hospitality and advertising) the reason for us-the tourists in Cusco cultural area are *Noqa Munakuyki...Quechua*. The interest is not us-the tourists, but them-the Quechuans and their cultural identity - a reversed perspective in which they-the Quechuans see us-the Worldwide tourists as their Otherness, not in the sense of learning of the Self and becoming the Other, but in that of affirmation of their own (continuing) cultural

identity. In this view, with the pink-paprika chips bowl standing for ethnic separation, as a strategy of cultural resistance, and the mixed chips bowl standing for continuum acculturation-enculturation, the dominant culture of Cusco revealed itself as a compensatory/recuperative re-action of its prestigious past. If we-tourists return home with souvenirs and ephemeral memories, they-the hosts re-iterate their primordial attachments by their own (locals acting as hosts/guides as intermediators) and with each tourist/ stranger group (their Otherness) with whom they inter-act. Tea or oxygen, as remedies for the (strangers') acclimatization, always available to tourists, but under locals' control, remain part of these strategies of resistance, ensuring a certain *distance*, necessary for ethnic perpetuation through adaptation, but never full adoption/integration/acceptance. Just as locals say, they managed to save their traditional viticulture when Spaniards came, turning their own wine, pisco, into a kind of cocktail, pisco sour. As for gastronomy ... that would be another challenging topic for the future.

CONCLUSIONS

Five years ago, a hypothetical journal of a hypothetical trip to Cusco-Peru would have included thousands of photographic snapshots, which would have been shared to family and friends *from distance*, online, as well as at *home*, upon returning. "Heart Mom" would have been the only notes from the place. On such a trip, I-the tourist, pre-pandemic digital nomad with (some) travel experience, and (some) marketing experience as well, would get many questions that would have remained suspended in a scheme of an intuitive logic, conditioned by previous experience (Adams, 1998: XX).

The actual trip, with the I-tourist doubled by the I-anthropologist (still apprentice) unveiled to me, citing classics, the original [and challenging] way of knowing what anthropology stands for. "Heart Mom" remains as a constant.

In the context of this fieldwork exploration as a practical exercise of direct observation, my Andean culture contact brought insightful theoretical and practical understanding of the Otherness and cultural identity. Cultural de-centering, as the exit from one's own culture, and at the same time enter to the specific and the comprehensive confrontation of the Other's culture (Mihăilescu, 2007:11) was the first re-action of myself. On one hand, this cultural de-center allowed observation without constraints as own culture's misperceptions. On the other hand, immersion into the Other's culture like, in my case, the Andean culture, raised that kind of existential conflict between the illusory of participatory observation and real reasons evoked by experienced anthropologists (Izard, in Bonte, Izard (coord), 1999: 431). Operating distance-proximity binomial also inside the new culture was instrumental for understanding, in terms of familiarization, the aggression and humility that applied to anthropological knowing. (Geană, 2014:97–113). In regards of the methods for collecting field data, using the camera – technology as the human extension – claims a double mission: an artistic performance

highlighting the anthropological perspective, the latter assuming also a double mission: selecting from the selected frames.

The reversed Otherness that I reflected on during my Andean exploration unveiled Machu Picchu as people, not as a monument, with natives, not the tourists, being at the center of their narrative. While sharing the same territory – first ones permanently, latter only temporarily, and placing themselves in distinct positions, according to their own interests, each of them – native and strangers-tourists are reciprocally determined. *Inca Way – which includes the Cusco cultural area* as a mixed nature harmony and culture preservation - tells the world about themselves-the hosts, ethnic groups (Quechua, Aymara) and thus re-affirm their permanence in the Andean space, while reinforcing their cultural identity. Insights are still there to further address, as professor Gheorghiu Geană once wrote: “Can that face of otherness be a real one? Does not the limited experience offer only a substitute of otherness?” (Geană, 1999:71).

Finally, as a Romanian proverb is saying: the traveler is best off on the road, and so I take away for the next fieldwork: fascination of difference and anthropology as an original way of knowing; gift and the counter-gift; cultural-identity construction, and anthropology of tourism.

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Photos from personal archive, November 2023

SOME DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE VILLAGE OF LILIEȘTI, PRAHOVA COUNTY 1921–1950

LEONARD–MIHAIL RĂDULESCU*

Abstract: This paper explores the development of the Liliești and Țintea communities through a dual lens of demographic analysis and the role of local elites, combining insights from the civil status registers of the St. Nicolas–Liliești Church archive (1921–1950) and the socio-cultural influence of key community figures. By examining trends in birth rates, mortality, healthcare access, and socio-economic factors, the research sheds light on the evolving health and demographic landscape of the area. Additionally, the study delves into the significant contributions of the local elites. This intersection of material development and symbolic influence underscores the critical role of the elites in fostering social cohesion, promoting education, and improving public health, ultimately driving the community's growth and resilience.

Keywords: local history, Prahova County, diseases, elites, interwar period

INTRODUCTION: LILIEȘTI, A SETTLEMENT IN THE HEART OF PRAHOVA COUNTY

Liliești is an urban settlement, part of Băicoi, a town in Prahova County. This place represents a relevant example of the urban-rural dynamics in the Curvature Subcarpathians region. With a strategic position along the DN1 National Road, Liliești benefits from enhanced connectivity to major urban centers such as Ploiești and Câmpina, an aspect that has favored its socio-economic development.

In recent decades, Liliești has experienced an accelerated urbanization process driven by increased infrastructure investments and the expansion of the real estate market. This phenomenon has been influenced by the proximity to Ploiești and the general suburbanization trends characteristic of regions near major urban agglomerations. At the same time, aspects related to the area's natural and cultural heritage offer opportunities for sustainable touristic development and the growth of the local economy.

The settlement is better known for its oil resources, but also for being the birthplace of renowned interwar Romanian politician and businessman, Dumitru Mociornița. Beyond this notable figure, there are also other individuals who,

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although they did not achieve the same fame as the businessman, have dedicated themselves to the local community. One such person is Father Ioan Teleanu, who, despite not having the same prominence as Dumitru Mociornița, was honored by the people of Liliești for his deeds.

Despite being active in different fields, both figures left a significant mark on Liliești. These topics will be discussed in the context of the actions that I. Teleanu and D. Mociornița undertook for the Liliești community during the interwar period.

A FEW GENERAL ASPECTS ABOUT LILIEȘTI IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

For Liliești, the 20th century was a significant period. The village developed thanks to its incorporation into the commune of Țintea. In this development process, beyond the local authorities of Țintea, the oil companies and the authorities of the neighboring commune, Băicoi, also played an important role. Alongside these individuals and industrial entities that came together to contribute, among other things, to the well-being of the area, support also came from important personalities such as the businessman, Dumitru Mociornița, a native of the village, and Colonel and Doctor, Emanuel Boteanu.

Following the chronological order, the first major event of the last century was the 1907 Peasants' Revolt. However, there were no recorded protests or violent actions in Liliești. In fact, no documents have been found in the county archives, the Ministry of Internal Affairs records, or any press articles indicating such actions. At that time, the village setting was quite different. Administratively, the hamlet of Liliești still belonged to the commune of Țintea. In 1904, the commune of Țintea, along with the hamlets of Liliești, Dâmbu, and Țintea, was under the administration of the Băicoi district (with its administrative center in Băicoi). As a territorial unit, the Băicoi district lasted until 1908. After 1908, and until 1925, the commune of Țintea, including the three mentioned hamlets, was part of the Doftănești district (with its administrative center in Bordeni). After 1925, the commune of Țintea was reassigned to the Filipești district.

Regarding material conditions, the early 20th century marked a period of relative economic growth for the peasants. As part of the 1921 Agrarian Reform, those who fought in World War I were rewarded for their military service with land bonuses of 2 or 4 *pogoane*¹ from the Cantacuzino, Buda, and Găgeni estates. Unfortunately, the exact land redistribution records from 1921 were lost. War widows were also granted land.

¹ A **pogon** is a traditional unit of land measurement used in Romania, particularly in rural areas. It is roughly equivalent to **0.92 hectares** or **2.27 acres**. The term is still used in some regions of Romania, although it has become less common with the adoption of the metric system. The pogon was historically used to measure agricultural land. The size of a pogon could vary slightly depending on the region or local customs.

Nine years later, following numerous administrative reforms, a general census was conducted. In 1930, according to this census, the locality had 1,104 inhabitants—541 men and 563 women (Manuilă, 1938:171). Around ten years after the 1930 census, another was conducted due to the territorial losses of 1940.

Compared to the 1930 census, the 1941 census recorded a significant increase. By 1941, Liliești was a village in the commune of Țintea, which administratively belonged to the Central district. The village had 1,548 inhabitants, of whom 775 were men and 773 were women. There were also minorities, including 8 Hungarians and 4 Germans, who were accounted for in the census (Stoian, 2020: 216).

After World War II, as part of the 1945 Agrarian Reform, several estates were expropriated, including those of Barbu Catargy, Pompiliu Capelanu, and Tr. Grigorescu. A total of 700 people were granted land, with 360 of them being military veterans and their families—soldiers who had fought on the front lines, widows, orphans, and disabled war veterans—each receiving one *pogon* of land.

At the beginning of the communist period, the village was briefly placed under the administration of the town of Băicoi, within the Ploiești North district. Two years later, it was returned to the commune of Țintea, under the Câmpina district, in the Prahova Region. During the second administrative-territorial reform of the 1950s, Liliești was still part of the commune of Țintea, but within the Ploiești Region. In 1956, during the population census, the village had 2,124 inhabitants, including 1,050 men and 1,074 women (*Recensământ 1956*, 1961:117).

METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES, WORKING WITH DOCUMENTS

In the autumn of 2021, I carried out a personal project aimed at analyzing civil status documents from the archive of the church in Liliești to gather information regarding the demographic situation during the interwar period, with some insights into the early post-war years.

In the first place, the study primarily focused on determining the natural population growth in the area under the church's jurisdiction. The archival research illustrated the effects of events that took place in the region between 1921 and 1950, as well as details related to everyday life aspects such as birth, marriage, and death. These aspects were studied through more than 3000 documents from the Liliești church archive. And yet, what new insights can these documents offer us?

The documents used provide valuable information about population dynamics, natural growth, and, last but not least, the local society. Together, all types of records—including birth, marriage, and death certificates—offer any researcher a new perspective on everyday life. These records are closely linked to the major events in which the population took part. They highlight everyday events at the village level, such as birth, baptism, marriage, and death. Church documents complement existing information, detailing parental ages in birth

certificates, bride and groom ages in marriage records, and causes of death, offering insights into epidemiological events and the population's response.

Additionally, the documents also illustrate the administrative perspective, showing how these events were recorded by the competent authorities. Furthermore, they reveal how the authorities acted to stop local epidemics. All of these are further complemented by the citizens themselves, whose names can be subject to genealogical or onomastic studies.

Regarding the actual work with these documents, the work began by organizing the civil status records based on their period and type. This meticulous process took three months (September to December 2021). After organizing the documents, I started examining the information they contained, and within six months (January to June 2022), I was able to compile a demographic statistical analysis of the population in the Liliești parish.

Beyond the civil status records, the church's administrative documents were also investigated. These documentations helped to complete the overall context. Among these were some important records that illustrate the level of cooperation between priests, local authorities, and the population in various situations. Given the subject of my study, the focus fell on episodes related to the epidemiological state of the population, as priests and local authorities at the time faced various seasonal epidemics and the need to implement sanitary measures to combat the spread of disease. Also, several aspects regarding the relationship between different local elites and authorities were presented, specifically the cooperation between priests and various municipal authorities.

In addition to the documents from church archives, I also used records from state archives, held by the county branches of the national archives. These documents provided an alternative perspective beyond that of the parish records—specifically, an administrative viewpoint at the county level. They allowed me to examine what other measures were taken to develop healthcare infrastructure and how the region's well-being and urbanization progressed over time.

The documents mainly consist of administrative and urban planning records, ordinances for implementing measures to combat various diseases, as well as civic actions related to public health. Additionally, they contain significant information about buildings of sanitary importance, such as a dispensary, a communal bath, and a municipal slaughterhouse. These records come from several archival collections, comprising approximately 100 documents related to the urban and sanitary development of the communes of Țintea and Băicoi (sourced from records covering the years 1930–1945) and, by extension, the village of Liliești. I started to access those documents in January 2022, with a period about 4 to 6 months to organise and process all data available.

All of these elements have essentially shaped the current research, giving it both dynamism and originality, while also defining its limitations.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH ASPECTS IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE DOCUMENTS OF THE ST. NICOLAS-LILIEȘTI CHURCH ARCHIVE, 1921–1950*

Using civil status registers, the research has succeeded in compiling a comprehensive study on the demographic, historical, and health-related evolution of the locality. Thanks to these documents, I was able to analyze many more aspects than initially intended, giving the research a historical and anthropological character. The current study presents corroborated data from over 500 civil status documents from the period 1921–1950.

For the first decade, 1921–1930, the following situation was recorded: 554 births and 352 deaths. Among the recorded deaths, 180 individuals were under 21 years old, 133 were under 7 years old, and 71 were under one year old. The natural population growth was positive, amounting to 402.

At the national level, certain patterns were observed between 1922 and 1923. The natural growth rate in 1923 was 13.7‰, which was lower than in 1922 (14.4‰) and 1921 (15.1‰).

Examining the table, we notice similar trends at the level of the Liliești parish. The reasons for these patterns in the years immediately following the war are primarily related to the integration of the population from newly acquired provinces, people's mentality, migration, and the reintegration of former soldiers into civilian society.

Table I

	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930
Births	84	74	64	85	82	86	72	62	83	62
Deaths	35	38	41	34	31	56	42	31	25	19
Weddings	15	13	15	13	13	16	18	13	17	18
Death under 21 yrs old	9	13	18	19	17	34	24	18	16	12
Natural growth	49	36	23	51	51	30	30	31	58	43

Population dynamics between 1921–1930

For the period 1931–1940, the authorities recorded 692 births and 375 deaths in the registers. Among the deceased, 170 were under 21 years old, 144 were under 7 years old, and 71 were under one year old. Once again, the natural population growth was positive, amounting to 318.

*A small part of the research was presented at the symposium “Man, Nature, Architecture” on November 28, 2023, organized by the Museum of Natural Sciences - Prahova in partnership with the Francisc Rainer Institute of Anthropology of the Romanian Academy. Additionally, parts of this study (which was not yet completed at that time) can be read in Romanian in the article *Liliești – schiță monografică*, published in “Anuar(ul)” Societății de Științe Istorice din România – Filiala Câmpina, 13/2022, pp. 290–309.

After 1930, a significant decline in natural population growth was observed nationwide, a trend that was also noticeable at the local level. The mortality rate decreased to 19.2 deaths per 1,000 inhabitants.

Finally, for the last studied period, 1941–1950, the figures indicate a continued positive natural population growth (208). During this decade, 540 people were born, while 325 passed away. Among the deceased, 88 were under 21 years old, 56 were under 7 years old, and 39 were under one year old.

For this decade as well, a continued decline in birth rates was observed, lasting until 1946. That year, the birth rate dropped to 23.8 live births per 1,000 inhabitants. However, birth rates began to recover and followed a positive trend toward 1950.

Table II

	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940
Births	68	67	82	54	75	72	66	81	70	57
Deaths	45	35	29	34	39	50	44	34	31	33
Weddings	15	16	19	8	26	23	13	19	13	12
Death under 21 yrs old	29	19	13	22	23	25	23	11	8	20
Natural growth	23	32	53	20	36	22	22	47	39	24

Population dynamics between 1931–1940

Although the natural population growth was positive, we observe negative figures among children. At the time, basic hygiene was often neglected, whether due to lack of knowledge or indifference.

This situation facilitated the emergence of several seasonal epidemics, such as scarlet fever, meningitis, and tuberculosis. Throughout the studied period, August was consistently the month with the highest number of deaths.

Table III

	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
Births	67	53	52	46	44	46	57	49	60	56
Deaths	23	50	31	43	30	38	34	20	34	22
Weddings	16	9	2	6	13	31	20	19	11	21
Death under 21 yrs old	11	16	9	2	6	10	6	4	6	3
Natural growth	44	3	21	3	14	8	23	29	26	34

Population dynamics between 1941–1950

In addition to poor hygiene, the economic situation of the residents played an important role. Limited financial resources hindered access to medical care, as

reflected in the lack of hospital-issued death certificates or burial permits. This is evident from the absence of death certificates or burial permits issued by hospitals. People only consulted a doctor when they could afford it—or when it was too late.

The lack of healthcare facilities was also a significant issue, at least until 1943. The Liliești parish area was under the care of a single doctor, assisted by two nurses. The doctor's office was located within the Social Insurance House of the Băicoi Oil Field. The small office was inadequate for the local population, and the doctor primarily served oil field workers, meaning the facility was not equipped to handle a large influx of patients. Additionally, the office was far from Liliești. While there were district doctors (usually one or two) and local doctors (again, one or two), medical personnel could not always reach patients in time. There were also very few communal health workers—only a handful of midwives and, more rarely, former military personnel serving as medics.

Until the dispensary in Țintea was built, severe cases had to be transported to Băicoi, which lacked facilities for treating infectious diseases. Patients with such conditions had to be taken to Movila Vulpilor, Ploiești, or Filipești de Târg, which involved considerable distances. In most cases, those suffering from infectious diseases died at home. This fact can be inferred from the absence of medical reports issued by hospitals. Many residents registered deaths themselves without waiting for official confirmation. The civil registry officer was sometimes called alongside the priest to verify the death.

Another factor contributing to the high mortality rate, especially among children, was the conservative mindset of the people. Many relied on traditional folk remedies. Parish records indicate that people sought medical help only as a last resort, with hospitalization being a rare first option. Those who worked at the civil registry documented these aspects on death or burial certificates. In the case of children, records show that those suffering from Tuberculosis, Typhoid or Scarlet Fever, or Dysentery usually died at home. Infants under one year old were the most affected. This conclusion is supported by civil registry entries, which recorded not only the deceased's age but also the cause and place of death. The few patients who did receive medical care often received it in their final moments—even for minor infections, cuts, or fractures. Consequently, hospitals issued a very limited number of death certificates.

The conservative mentality also fueled distrust toward doctors, as most medical professionals came from wealthier backgrounds. Locals sometimes viewed medical personnel with suspicion, interpreting their behaviors as strange, inappropriate, or even associated with negative superstitions.

Another major cause of high infant mortality was malnutrition. Parents struggled to provide adequate nutrition for their children, either due to lack of time or financial constraints. Additionally, improper food preparation may have contributed to this issue. Among the recorded death certificates, 14 explicitly cited malnutrition as the cause of death.

After 1943, with the construction of the dispensary, the situation improved significantly. The institution was established thanks to the efforts of Major and

lawyer Theodor Dumitrescu (mayor of Țintea) and industrialist Dumitru Mociornița. Both played a crucial role in aiding the population, with Mociornița making substantial donations to support the municipality's efforts to build the dispensary.

The dispensary also housed a maternity ward. Statistics from this period show a significant decline in infant mortality, suggesting that the population was beginning to recognize the importance of hygiene and professional medical care. Before the dispensary was built, medical treatments and consultations were provided by Elena Manoliu, who was responsible for Băicoi, Țintea, Mislea, Scorțeni, and Bordeni. Additionally, oil companies in Băicoi operated medical aid stations that could offer some healthcare services.

According to contemporary records, the average life expectancy was between 55 and 60 years of age, while the infant mortality rate was 200‰. These circumstances led to the construction of both the dispensary and public baths in Țintea between 1939 and 1943, making them accessible to Băicoi residents as well. In 1943, the dispensary recorded over 1,514 medical consultations, leading to a significant improvement in public health. In 1942, infant mortality in Țintea stood at 18.7% (5.2% in Liliești). However, the establishment of the dispensary, along with an increase in medical personnel—likely supported by government health campaigns—resulted in a major decline in infant mortality, reducing it to 7% by 1943.

Despite the indicated life expectancy and high mortality rates, two exceptionally long-lived individuals were identified in the parish records. Dinu Mălăescu, born in 1823, passed away on August 8, 1927, at 5 PM in Țintea, Liliești district, at the age of 104. The second centenarian was Stana Alexe Câmpeanu, who was born in 1828 and died on March 19, 1930, at the age of 102.

Regarding marriages, only the decade 1941–1950 showed a decline in such events due to war, famine, and the post-war economic crisis. Most weddings took place in January, February, and November. The reasons are easy to understand—these months were preferred because people could host feasts using the food stockpiled from the harvest and livestock slaughtered for the holidays. Late marriages were rare, with only nine recorded throughout the studied period.

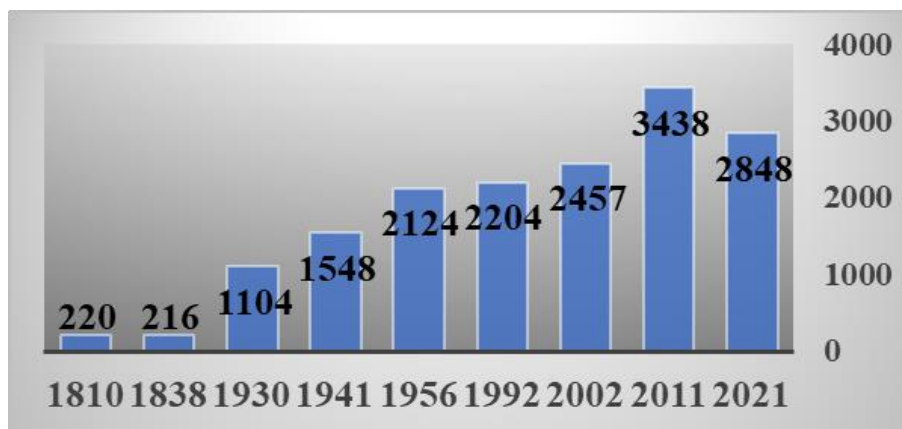
Table IV

	Name	Disease	Age	Date of death
1.	Gh. Diamandi Rădulescu	Scarlet fever	3y, 4 m	08.25.1922
2.	Achil Georgescu	Pulmonary tuberculosis	32y	01.04.1926
3.	Vasile Rotaru	Pulmonary tuberculosis	41y	05.14.1927
4.	Elena Ion Avram	Scarlet fever	1y, 3m	06.08.1931

	Name	Disease	Age	Date of death
5.	Toma P. Nuțulescu	Diphtheria	2y	06.19.1931
6.	C.țin Lazăr	Meningitis	24y	12.31.1934
7.	Maria Gh. Vasile	Pulmonary tuberculosis	31y	08.05.1937
8.	Marian M. Pătrașcu	Pulmonary tuberculosis	55y	10.18.1937
9.	Floarea C.V. Mihăilescu	Scarlet fever	9y	12.01.1937
10.	Ion C. Mociornița	Meningitis	16y	06.15.1938
11.	Gheorghe Nuță	Peritonitis	14y	08.21.1941
12.	Vasile Grindeanu	Typhus	33y	04.02.1942
13.	Stan Gh. Simion	Typhus	44y	03.30.1942

A situation regarding the frequency of certain diseases

Graphic I



The evolution of the population in Liliești

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES, SANITARY WORKS AND THE LOCAL ELITES

In the summer of 1940, Major and lawyer Theodor Dumitrescu became mayor of Țintea, significantly increasing the municipal budget from 300,000 to over 8 million lei by 1942/1943. With support from Colonel Dr. Emanuel Boteanu and industrialist Dumitru Mociornița, both influential figures, the administration launched major public utility projects. These included constructing a communal

bathhouse, a dispensary, and a slaughterhouse, alongside planned road, bridge, and sewage system repairs.

A 1940 memorandum cataloged public assets to guide local development, covering key buildings and infrastructure. The village of Liliești, then part of Țintea, also benefited from this, with main roads renovated and the St. Nicholas Church undergoing major repairs. These improvements laid the foundation for future urbanization and enhanced living standards in the region.

Colonel Dr. Emanuel Boteanu communal bathhouse

The communal bathhouse was a necessary project successfully completed by the Țintea Town Hall. Initially intended for the local school students, it was later opened to the public. The construction took place on a site where an existing building, previously leased to Nicu Marinescu, was demolished after compensation was paid. Work began in mid-1940, with over 170,000 lei allocated from the local budget, and architect M. Rădulescu overseeing the project (S.J.A.N – PH, dos. 3/1940: 70, 77).

The bathhouse featured eight rooms, including a main shower area, a dressing room, two separate baths, a large entrance hall, a steam room heated by a gas-powered boiler, toilets, and storage cabinets. It operated on weekends for the public and on Thursdays for students, with free access for students, war invalids, orphans, and widows (Popescu, 1945: 120).

Opened in early 1941 after inspections, it operated on weekends for the public and Thursdays for students, with free access for vulnerable groups. Colonel Dr. Emanuel Boteanu funded the plumbing, electrical installations, and labor, although his total contribution remains unknown.



*Dr. Emanuel Boteanu and communal bathhouse
(from Popescu, 1945).*

Dumitru Mociornița communal dispensary

The communal dispensary, like the bathhouse, was a crucial project initiated in May 1940 but completed only in the early 1943 due to funding and design challenges. The initial construction site of 220 square meters was insufficient, requiring an additional 61 square meters purchased from Maria Robea in May 1941. In early 1942, expanding the dispensary became necessary due to the growing floating population in the oil industry. The municipality sought to acquire 48.73 square meters from Nicolae Neagu, but after legal disputes, the land was eventually purchased in mid-1942 (S.J.A.N – PH, dos. 5/1940: 26, 29, 80).

Construction was completed on December 20, 1942, and the dispensary was inaugurated on January 1, 1943. Costs totaled approximately 3.7 million lei, with industrialist Dumitru Mociornița contributing significantly, covering at least 650,000 lei. The dispensary occupied 204 square meters on a 330-square-meter plot (*ibidem*, 76, 80, 84).



Dumitru Mociornița and dispensary, 1944 (from Popescu, 1945)

*The work of Father Ioan Teleanu**

Ioan Teleanu was one of the most notable residents of Liliеști, dedicating his life as a priest to serving the communities of Țintea and Băicoi. His work was extensive, involving both spiritual and material contributions to these settlements.

Born on May 26, 1899, in Budești, Călărași County, he graduated from the Central Theological Seminary in Bucharest as the top student of his class, with an

* Some of this information was part of a presentation called **Rolul preotului în comunitatea sătească expus prin dovezi extrase dintr-o arhivă parohială** [The role of the priest in the village community presented through evidence extracted from a parish archive] which I held during the Anthropology Day festivity organized by the Francisc Rainer Institute of Anthropology of the Romanian Academy on February 20, 2025. The presentation expressed some relevant information regarding other methods of approaching the writing of a monography, but in the spirit of Dimitre Gusti's methodology (the Gustian method for monographs was the theme of the festivity).

average grade of 9.14. On December 18, 1920, he was assigned to the Liliеști parish, officially beginning his service as a parish priest on January 1, 1921. Alongside his religious duties, he also became a teacher after passing a qualifying exam in 1920. Later, he earned a Theology degree from the University of Bucharest with an average of 8. His final religious examination took place on June 28, 1949, when he achieved a score of 9.81, earning the title of "econom" with the right to wear a red sas

Besides his spiritual and cultural contributions, Father Ioan Teleanu also played an important role in disease prevention and the implementation of sanitary regulations. Understanding the health challenges faced by the communities of Țintea and Băicoi, he actively promoted hygiene and worked closely with local authorities to improve public health conditions.

His efforts included organizing awareness campaigns on hygiene, advocating for access to clean water, and supporting vaccination initiatives. Additionally, he collaborated with local medical professionals to ensure that villagers received proper medical care. Through his dedication, Father Teleanu became not only a spiritual guide but also a key figure in enhancing the well-being of the people he served.

Father Ioan Teleanu played a crucial role in combating epidemics and improving public health in the communities he served. During his tenure, outbreaks of diseases such as Poliomyelitis and Pellagra posed significant threats, exacerbated by poor infrastructure, lack of medical personnel, and conservative mentalities among locals.

In 1927, he was involved in a Poliomyelitis prevention campaign, monitoring and reporting potential outbreaks. In 1933, following a pastoral letter from Patriarch Miron Cristea, he led efforts to educate the population on the dangers of consuming unripe or moldy corn, which caused a Pellagra outbreak. He formed a committee with the communal doctor and local officials to promote dietary diversification. Beyond disease prevention, Father Teleanu participated in sanitation campaigns. In 1940, he supervised hygiene improvements in Liliеști, documenting progress for local health authorities. In 1942, he assisted in implementing a county-wide initiative mandating rural households to build latrines, ensuring compliance through public meetings and inspections.

His efforts highlight the vital role of clergy in public health initiatives, bridging the gap between authorities and communities to improve living conditions.



Father Ioan Teleanu and the church administration (from personal collection)

SOME ANTROPOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS ABOUT THOSE ELITE

The role of the elite in community development, from an anthropological and sociological perspective, is complex and varies depending on the historical, cultural, and social context of each society. The elite have a significant impact on the evolution of communities, influencing not only the economic and political life but also cultural values, traditions, and interpersonal relationships.

From an anthropological standpoint, the elite can be understood as a group of individuals who hold power and influence within a society, either through wealth, education, status, or other forms of social capital. Most importantly, they are not alone, they are not solitary rulers. These individuals are responsible for creating and maintaining the norms and social structures that govern behavior and relationships within the community. They are indeed forming a network of actual social relationships between individuals (in the present case from the same place but from a different society)². A *social structure* consists of all the persistent, patterned relationships between individuals and groups. It is not merely a collection of people, but the network of relationships that connect them. These relationships are governed by social rules and institutions, which provide stability and continuity to society (Radcliffe-Brown, 1958: 169–171).

The elite, especially in traditional societies or in earlier historical periods, have been important agents in transmitting cultural values. Through education, religion, and the establishment of power institutions (such as the church, schools, or local governance), the elite can contribute to consolidating a collective identity. For example, priests, teachers, or political leaders have often been the individuals who transmitted the cultural and ethical norms of the community. They are often seen as the agents that provoke or facilitate social change. When a member of the elites promotes a particular type of reform—be it educational, economic, or political—it can profoundly influence the social structure and values of a community. For example, if an educated member of the elites promotes ideas of equal rights for all citizens, this can generate significant changes in traditional power structures and social status. While the social structures that they build are providing stability, they are not static. They can change through processes like migration, birth, death, marriage, and other social dynamics. However, the underlying patterns tend to persist, giving society its continuity (*ibidem*, 176–177).³

² An interesting thing is that Ioan Teleanu is, after all, an outsider, not a native of the place, while Dumitru Mociornița is a native but has somewhat become estranged, having lived most of his life in Bucharest. This can represent a contrast, yet the two seem to overcome these differences by establishing a subsidiary network to the social network from which each man originates.

³ In this case D. Mociornița is a politician who spends most of his time in Bucharest with other people from his elites group and also comes home to Liliiești to help. These things only strengthen his status as a member of the elites, who migrates between two societies to found an interconnected, perhaps unconscious, network, his local elite contact in Liliiești being the priest Ioan Teleanu.

Social structures persist because of their ability to integrate change and promote interdependency among members. Key factors contributing to social stability include structural cohesion, social dependency, geographic isolation, and the types of exchanges within the society. However, when social structures and societal values become incompatible, or when external and internal pressures arise, these structures must adapt and change to ensure the society's continued survival and healthy development.

In many societies, the elites control the economic, political, and cultural resources. These resources are not distributed evenly, which can create discrepancies between different social groups. The elites have the power to decide which groups gain access to education, employment, or public services, thus influencing the social and economic dynamics of the community.

From a sociological standpoint, the elites are groups that exert significant control over the power structure and institutions of a society. Sociology studies how these groups influence behaviors and social relationships, as well as how power structures are legitimized and perpetuated.

Sociology defines the elite as a group that holds authority over the majority of the population, being able to influence politics and the economy. An example would be the political elites who adopt laws and policies that affect the entire community. These policies can contribute to the development of infrastructure, education, and healthcare, but they can also generate inequalities or social conflicts, depending on the interests they serve.

The elite can influence, directly or indirectly, the social mobility of individuals within a community, because they are not alone. They are interconnected with others (Mills, 1959: 132). For example, through education and access to resources, members of elite groups in business or politics can rise on the social ladder. However, in societies where elites are highly concentrated, there are barriers that limit access to development opportunities for those in lower social classes. They hold power or influence thanks to the role assigned to their position, which directly contributes to maintaining or changing the social structure and the norms it is based on. The prestige they enjoy enables them to serve as role models, working together with their group of affiliation to influence the behavior of others (Dreitzel, 1963: 4–5). They are not necessarily the most hardworking, intelligent, or talented individuals. Rather, they are simply those who possess greater social power—the ability to influence others (Turchin, 2023: 8).

Sociologists often focus on how elites justify and maintain power. In many societies, the elites are invested with legitimacy, either through tradition, education, or political mechanisms that guarantee the continuity of power. Sociology can analyze the ideologies promoted by the elites (such as nationalism, conservatism, liberalism) and how these ideologies are imposed on or accepted by the rest of the population.

From a sociological perspective, the elites can be seen as interest groups fighting to maintain or expand their privileges. This can lead to conflicts between different social classes or ethnic groups who feel excluded or marginalized.

So, the elites can be a group whose superiority is based on acquired qualifications and specific talents, another whose superiority is traditional and may very well be unskilled, and finally, a group that serves as a reservoir of various skills and talents (Nadel, 1956: 414). Furthermore, sociology studies how the elites interact with the middle or lower classes and how movements of social contestation (such as revolutions or protests) can arise.

What insights can be drawn from a sociological and anthropological perspective?

Both in sociology and anthropology, it can be understood that the elites play a central role in perpetuating social inequalities. They control essential resources and form social structures that favor already privileged groups, leading to low social mobility and the continuation of social stratification.

The elites are agents of change. When they adopt new ideas or technologies, these can have a profound impact on the community, facilitating modernization or, conversely, maintaining traditional and conservative structures that limit social progress.

From an anthropological standpoint, the elites are not just groups with economic or political power but also groups that symbolize certain values and norms of the community. This can include religious, national, or cultural ideals that form a type of social cohesion but also division, depending on how these symbols are interpreted by various social groups.

APPLYING THE THEORY TO THE CASE OF IOAN TELEANU, DUMITRU MOCIORNIȚA, AND OTHER COMMUNITY LEADERS IN ȚINTEA

By applying these concepts to the individuals such as Ioan Teleanu, Dumitru Mociornița, and other leaders from the Țintea community, we can understand their roles as local elites and their impact on community development.

From an anthropological and sociological perspective, Ioan Teleanu served as a central figure in the cultural and educational development of the Liliеști, Țintea, and Băicoi communities. Through his religious and educational activities, he had a profound impact on shaping collective identity and maintaining social norms.

Ioan Teleanu – religious elite:

- **Transmission of cultural values and norms:** As a priest, Teleanu not only guided the community spiritually but also contributed to the local education system. His involvement in teaching and religious ceremonies helped to transmit cultural and ethical norms, contributing to the formation of a collective identity.
- **Religious Elite as social cohesion agents:** Teleanu played a crucial role in maintaining social cohesion by promoting shared values and creating a

stable cultural environment. As a religious leader, he helped strengthen the collective identity of the community, especially in times of hardship, such as during health crises or economic difficulties.

- **Health prevention and public hygiene:** In response to significant epidemics, such as Polio and Pellagra, Teleanu was instrumental in organizing public health campaigns. His collaboration with local authorities in spreading knowledge about disease prevention exemplifies the role that religious elites play in facilitating social change and shaping public health behaviors.

Dumitru Mociornița – political and economic elite:

Dumitru Mociornița, as an influential local leader, contributed to the economic and political development of Țintea. His actions helped integrate the community into regional and national governance frameworks.

Role in Local Development:

- **Community infrastructure and resource distribution:** Dumitru Mociornița's influence in local governance may have facilitated the development of infrastructure and access to resources, improving the community's living conditions and contributing to its overall progress.
- **Promoting social mobility:** As a leader within the elites, D. Mociornița may have created opportunities for the local population to access education or other resources, thereby promoting social mobility for the community's younger generation.

SOCIAL-ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DUMITRU MOCIORNIȚA AND IOAN TELEANU

Although they came from different backgrounds (a priest and an influential industrialist), their relationship was based on equality. This reflects an interesting dynamics where religious authority and economic authority collaborate without a rigid hierarchy, but rather on the basis of mutual respect and shared goals.

In the context of social dynamics, the relationship between individuals from different backgrounds, such as a priest and an influential industrialist, offers insights into how power relations and social hierarchies can be navigated effectively. Despite their differing roles and societal positions, their collaboration can be characterized by equality, mutual respect, and shared objectives. This dynamics is particularly noteworthy as it challenges traditional notions of rigid hierarchies, instead emphasizing collaboration between religious and economic authorities.

The concept of strategic action fields (Fligstein & McAdam, 2011: 1–5) provides a useful framework for understanding how different actors interact within a social context. In this scenario, the priest and the industrialist operate within a shared field where their actions are influenced by mutual respect and common goals, rather than by traditional power structures. This approach highlights the importance of social networks and interpersonal relationships in shaping collaborative efforts.

Dumitru Mociornița, despite being a nationally renowned industrialist, maintained his connection to his native places, investing financial and logistical resources in the development of the community in Liliești. This illustrates a traditional model where the economic elites support local initiatives, thereby consolidating their social prestige. The collaboration between the priest and the industrialist highlights a model of social solidarity based on personal networks. Interpersonal relationships, especially in small communities, were essential for mobilizing resources and achieving large-scale projects (Stone, 1993: 3–8).

The interaction between religion (Ioan Teleanu) and economy (Dumitru Mociornița) shows how the religious sphere and the economic sphere were not separate, but interconnected. The financial support of an industrialist for a religious project highlights an interdependence between economic capital and symbolic capital, with each supporting the other to consolidate their influence in the community (Molotch, 1976: 309–312).

To sum up, the relationship between a priest and an industrialist offers a compelling example of how power relations can be navigated through mutual respect and shared goals. This dynamics highlights the importance of social networks and solidarity in community development, particularly in contexts where local elites play a pivotal role. By understanding these dynamics, we can better appreciate how different sectors of society can collaborate effectively to drive positive change.

The combined analysis of the civil status registers from the St. Nicolas–Liliești Church archive and the role of local elites in Țintea provides a profound understanding of the community's development from both a demographic and socio-cultural perspective. The civil status records reveal crucial trends regarding birth rates, mortality, and healthcare access, shedding light on the community's health evolution and the impact of socio-economic factors on population dynamics. These findings highlight the need for sustained investment in medical infrastructure, public health education, and social support systems to improve community well-being, especially in rural areas where access to healthcare is often limited.

From an anthropological and sociological perspective, the role of the elites—whether religious, economic, or political—proves to be a significant factor in shaping the community's trajectory. The study underscores how the elites function not only as the economic and political decision-makers but also as

cultural and social influencers, consolidating a collective identity, and fostering social cohesion. Figures such as Ioan Teleanu and Dumitru Mociornița exemplify how the elites operate at the intersection of social, economic, and cultural spheres, shaping both material development and symbolic values within the community.

The collaboration between I. Teleanu, a religious leader, and D. Mociornița, an industrialist, illuminates a dynamic model of interdependence between the economic and religious elite, demonstrating how such relationships, based on mutual respect and shared goals, can be a driving force behind local progress. Their combined efforts in building infrastructure, improving public health, and promoting education had a lasting impact on the community, enhancing social mobility, and fostering a deeper sense of unity among the residents. The merging of economic capital and symbolic capital was not a mere transfer of resources, but a collaboration that reinforced their collective influence, bridging the gap between economic growth and cultural preservation.

These elites were agents of social change, shaping not only the physical landscape but also the values and norms of the community. Their influence extended beyond material wealth and governance, as they were also responsible for transmitting and reinforcing cultural values, maintaining social order, and facilitating collective action in times of crisis. Teleanu's efforts in health campaigns and Mociornița's contributions to local development illustrate how the elites, through strategic use of resources, can empower communities, facilitate social mobility, and challenge traditional power structures.

The relationship between religion and economy in Țintea demonstrates that the two spheres are not isolated, but rather intricately interconnected. This collaboration challenges conventional hierarchical structures and highlights the importance of building networks of solidarity across different societal roles. The example set by Teleanu and Mociornița offers a model of how elites can work together to address the needs of the community, blending the resources of both the symbolic and economic spheres to build a more cohesive and resilient society.

Ultimately, this study underscores that rural community development hinges not just on material wealth and infrastructure but also on the symbolic capital of local elites. Their cultural and social influence, combined with economic power, plays a vital role in shaping the collective identity and fostering progress. This case study highlights the critical role of the elites in the development of local communities and the complex, often reciprocal, relationship between economic, social, and cultural spheres. It serves as a reminder that development is a multifaceted process, where social solidarity, mutual respect, and strategic leadership are as essential as financial resources in achieving long-term, sustainable progress.

Some medical documents and death certificates from the Liliiești church Archives

ROMANIA

Serv. Sanitar și Consiliul de Higienă al Orașului Ploiești

PASAPORT

In urma cererei înregistrată sub No. 185/1922, prin care D. Diamandi Rădulescu din Comuna Tintea, cere autorizare a se transporta cadavrul fiului său anume George Rădulescu, de ani 3 care a sucombat în cura Spitalului Izolare din acest oraș strada Petru Ghe. Nr. 52 în urma maladii Scarlatina Malignă, după cum se constată din certificatul de Verificarea morții eliberat de Medicul Șef al Spitalului de Izolare cu Nr. 8 din 23 August 1922.

Noi Primarul Orașului Ploiești, Președinte al Consiliului de Higienă și Medicul Șef al Orașului vice-președinte, în conformitate cu Regulamentul pentru transportarea cadavrelor omenești, dăm autorizațiune a se transporta cadavrul decedatului George Rădulescu dela Ploiești la Comitutul Comunei Tintea unde urmează a se înmormânta luându-se mai întâi următoarele măsuri sanitare:

- 1) Cadavrul se va înfășura într'un cearceaf muat în soluție de acid fenic 5%.
- 2) Se va așeza într'un cosciug hermetic închis și se va țintui și sigila de Serviciul sanitar al Orașului care sigiliu nu se va mai ridica.

Transportul se va face cu trăsura de la Ploiești direct la Comitutul Comunei Tintea Sud Prahova.

Timpul valabilității acestui pasaport este de trei zile cu începere de astăzi.

Președintele Consiliului
Primar, *[Signature]* Vice-președinte
Medic Șef, *[Signature]*

[Stamp: Serv. Sanitar și Consiliul de Higienă al Orașului Ploiești]
Nº 235
1922 August 26
Secretar: *[Signature]*

Two passports for transporting corpses to cemeteries. In this case as well, the deceased individuals still posed a risk of spreading the disease. One was a three-year-old boy (Gheorghe Rădulescu) who died of scarlet fever at a hospital in Ploiești, and the other was a three-month-old girl (Elena Avram) who died from the same illness. Documents are from August 1922 and June 1931.

ROMANIA

Serv. Sanitar și Consiliul de Higienă al Orașului Ploiești

PASAPORT

In urma cererei înregistrată sub No. 204/1931, prin care Frușcia Elena Ion Avram din Comuna Băieștii, cere autorizare a se transporta cadavrul fiicei sale anume Elena Ion Avram, de ani 4 care a sucombat în cura Spitalului Izolare din acest oraș strada Mausdăreni 54 în urma maladii Scarlatina, după cum se constată din certificatul de Verificarea morții eliberat de Medicul Șef al Spitalului cu Nr. 18 din 8 Iunie 1931.

Noi Primarul Orașului Ploiești, Președinte al Consiliului de Higienă și Medicul Șef al Orașului vice-președinte, în conformitate cu Regulamentul pentru transportarea cadavrelor omenești, dăm autorizațiune a se transporta cadavrul decedatului Elena Ion Avram dela Ploiești la Cimitirul Săntăreț unde urmează a se înmormânta luându-se mai întâi următoarele măsuri sanitare:

- 1) Cadavrul se va înfășura într'un cearceaf muat în soluție de acid fenic 5%.
- 2) Se va așeza într'un cosciug hermetic închis și se va țintui și sigila de Serviciul sanitar al Orașului care sigiliu nu se va mai ridica.

Transportul se va face cu caruța cu cai de la Ploiești la Cimitirul Săntăreț la Comitutul Săntăreț Săntăreț Sud Prahova.

Timpul valabilității acestui pasaport este de 3 zile cu începere de astăzi.

Președintele Consiliului
Primar, *[Signature]* Vice-președinte
Medic Șef, *[Signature]*

[Stamp: Serv. Sanitar și Consiliul de Higienă al Orașului Ploiești]

Formular Nr. 19 (art. 15 și 171 din regulament)

25/1938

REGATUL ROMÂNIEI

PRIMĂRIA COMUNEI Prabova SATUL Prabova
 Piasa Prabova Județul Prabova

AUTORIZAȚIE DE ÎNMORMÂNTARE
 Nr.

Dăm voie a se înmormânta corpul decedatului:
Ion C. Mociornița - elev - de
vară 16, din Prabova - st. Meningitei
R250, de confesiune ortodoxă
 încetat din viață la 15 ale lunii Iunie
1938, la ora 5 1/2 de maladie:
Meningita purulentă

Înmormântarea se va face la cimitirul Com. Prabova în ziua de
16 Iunie 1938, după ora 12 1/2

OFITER AL STĂRII CIVILE,
 (L. S.) [Signature]
 Seful Serviciului [Signature]
 Notar,

Anul 1938
 luna Iunie ziua 15

M. O., Imprimeria Chișinău/1937.

Formular Nr. 19 (art. 15 și 171 din regulament)

REGATUL ROMÂNIEI

PRIMĂRIA COMUNEI Filipești SATUL Târg
 Piasa Filipești Județul Prabova

29/1937

AUTORIZAȚIE DE ÎNMORMÂNTARE se
 Nr. 64 Pasaport

Dăm voie a se înmormânta corpul decedatului:
Floarea Constantin R. Mihăilescu în
stare de spui, de febră din Com. Tutea Jud.
Prabova, de confesiune ortodoxă
 încetat din viață la 29 ale lunii Noiembrie
1937, la ora 10 p.m. de Scarlatina

Înmormântarea se va face la cimitirul Com. Tutea Jud. Prabova imediat după ora 10 p.m. în ziua de
30 Noiembrie - Cadavru se va înmormânta în scara
subterană și se va îngropa după obiceiul

OFITER AL STĂRII CIVILE,
 (L. S.) [Signature]
 Seful Serviciului [Signature]
 Notar,

Anul 1937
 luna Decembrie ziua 1

M. O., Imprimeria Chișinău/1937.

Authorizations issued by local hospitals to permit the burial of children aged 16 (Ion C. Mociornița, a student, who died in the hospital of Meningitis) and 9 (Floarea C. Mihăilescu, who died in the hospital of scarlet fever) from December 1937 and June 1938. Such documents were issued only for individuals who died from contagious diseases, as their bodies could still pose a risk of transmitting the illness.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In the present study, we conducted an analysis of lesser-known and utilized sources to examine demographic and health aspects in a restricted area, specifically the village of Liliești located in Prahova County, with its eponymous parish. The sources used, largely civil records documents procured directly from the archive of the church in Liliești, proved to be a source of knowledge for presenting certain aspects from the period 1921–1950 regarding the evolution of the locality from demographic, social and sanitary perspectives. The study also aimed to serve as an example of how to utilize unconventional sources, even for anthropologists and some historians. The analysis of these documents revealed many lesser-known aspects not only about the studied locality but also about the local administration, church administration, and daily life during the studied period. Beyond these aspects, the documents from the archive of the Saint Nicolas Church in Liliești provided a starting point for exploring the Prahova County Archives. Using church archives as a reference for searches in county archives, we were able to reconstruct aspects related to local administration, the attitude of priests and authorities towards events of the time, and how the population reacted to events such as epidemics, famine, or war.

In addition to the presented facts, studying documents from both archives helped in creating bibliographies of social elites from Liliești. Among many personalities, we focused on important figures like Dumitru Mociornița and Ioan Teleanu, observing their involvement in society and collaboration within the elite circle, thereby revealing essential aspects that completed the overall picture. Using documents, we outlined several aspects related to these elites, social and economic relationships, and their actions in supporting the community in Liliești and other places. The analysis was conducted from an anthropological and sociological perspective, using methodological aspects typical of history to create a context, and then presenting aspects related to the networks these elites were part of and how they influenced local society.

Through the exhaustive analysis of civil status documents, such as those from the archive of the Liliești church, the study offers a detailed and complex image of the demographic, social, and sanitary evolution of the village of Liliești during the period 1921–1950. We highlighted the importance of using such sources for a profound understanding of community dynamics, the role of local elites in shaping society, and how the population reacted to major events, thus constituting a valuable model for interdisciplinary approaches to anthropological, historical, and sociological research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research would not have been possible without the help of Father Marius Grigore and church-warden Mădălin Posea⁴ from St. Nicholas Church – Liliești, Băicoi. I sincerely thank them for granting me access to the church archive and for their valuable explanations, as well as for their continuous support in the

⁴ History teacher (gr. I) at Drăgănești school, Prahova.

development of the book *Liliești: satul și parohia. O monografie social-istorică* [*Liliești: The Village and the Parish. A Social-Historical Monograph*], which is still work in progress. The present study will also be included in the upcoming book, but in a more elaborate form.

Also, I express my gratitude to Dr. Liviu Damian⁵ and Dr. Sebastian Ștefănuță⁶ for their valuable guidance on research methodology and sincere thanks to Ruxandra Stoichiță (Gogu)⁷, Mirela Petrică⁸, Andra–Daniela Păuna⁹ for their help in editing certain language aspects and proofreading in English.

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ARCHIVE MATERIAL

S.J.A.N – PH: Serviciul județean al arhivelor naționale – Prahova [Prahova County Archives], fond Primăria Comunei Țintea, dos. 3/1940 and dos. 5/1940.

Arhiva Parohiei Liliești – Băicoi, Biserica cu hramul Sfânta Treime și Sfântul Nicolae:

Fond de stare civilă 1921–1950 [Saint Nicolas Church Liliești Archives, Civil records 1921–1950]

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BIOARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY ON A HUMAN SKELETON OF SABATINOVKA CULTURE, DISCOVERED AT NOVOSIOLOVCA (TARACLIA DISTRICT, REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA)

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LUMINITA BEJENARU^{1,3,*}, VASILICA-MONICA GROZA¹

Abstract: This work presents the results of anthropological examination of a skeleton belonging to Sabatinovka culture, discovered at Novosiolovca (Taraclia District, Republic of Moldova). Although the skeleton's poor state of preservation limited the analysis, the recovered remains revealed data on age at death and sex (i.e., female of 25–30 years old), and on dentition such as an advanced dental wear and some non-metric traits (i.e., mesial accessory cusp, supernumerary cusps) providing relevant information for understanding the biological diversity. These findings contribute to defining the phenotypic variability of the Sabatinovka population and provide valuable comparative data for future research on population affinities and biological continuity in the Bronze Age.

Keywords: bioanthropology, human bones and teeth, Sabatinovka Culture, Bronze Age, Republic of Moldova

INTRODUCTION

Bioarchaeology, as an interdisciplinary field studying human remains found in archaeological contexts, aims to understand the past of people based on information concerning health, lifestyle, occupational activities, diet, and the environment in which individuals lived (Knudson and Stojanowski, 2008; Larsen, 2015). Since the past lives of people were influenced not only by biological factors but also by social, economic, and cultural conditions, bioarchaeology requires an integrated approach, involving interaction between various disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology, medicine, genetics, biochemistry, etc. (Radu *et al.*, 2013). Thus, new methodologies arising from the combination of techniques from various scientific fields allow researchers to

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explore new perspectives and deepen the understanding of human prehistory. Current approaches in the study of dental morphology, dental wear, and pathologies play a crucial role in bioarchaeology, providing valuable information about diet, lifestyle habits, health conditions, and biological affinities of different human groups from the past.

In 2022, archaeological research conducted by the National Archaeological Agency in Chişinău discovered a tumulus (*T9*) containing six tombs (i.e., *M1-6*), located in the western part of Novosiolovca (Taraclia district, Republic of Moldova). The site is situated 3.2 km west of the western edge of the locality, on the upper part of the watershed between the Ialpug and Salcia rivers (GPS coordinates: 45°54'00.1"N 28°32'56.1"E) (Figure 1).

The approximate diameter of the tumulus was about 25 meters, and it was completely flattened. The site was noticeable on the surface of the ground like a light brown stain that contrasted with the dark gray background of the soil.

According to stratigraphic data, the tumulus *T9* was built in the early Bronze Age above a yamnaya culture tomb (*M2*). Later, in the Middle Bronze Age, two burials were made in the existing mantle of the tumulus, as rectangular pits covered with stone slabs, belonging to the Mnogovalikovaya culture (*M1* and *M3*). In the Late Bronze Age, a grave was made in the southern sector of the mantle (*M5*), attributed to the Sabatinovka culture. Another tomb was discovered in the central part of the tumulus (*M4*), probably from the first centuries of our era, attributed with reservation to the Sarmatian culture. The last cultural and chronological horizon of the site belongs to a tomb from the early medieval period, probably belonging to a Turanian.

This work focuses on the analysis of the skeletal remains found in the tomb of Late Bronze Age, Sabatinovka culture (*M5*), contributing to the knowledge of that community. The Sabatinovka culture emerged during the Late Bronze Age as a fusion of the Mnogovalikovaya and Srubnaia cultures. It thrived in the 14th-13th centuries B.C. in the steppe region north of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, reaching as far as the Prut River and the mouth of the Danube (Kashuba *et al.*, 2010).

This culture is characterized by tumular funerary rites, where older burial mounds were reused for burials. In general, the deceased were buried in simple pits, positioned in curved lateral decubitus, often facing east. The Sabatinovka people relied on agriculture and animal husbandry for their livelihoods, focusing on cereal cultivation to adapt to the environmental conditions of the area. These key elements define the cultural and economic practices of the Sabatinovka culture during its peak in the Late Bronze Age (Sava, 1994; Sîrbu, 2023).

This research can provide valuable information about the dietary habits, lifestyle and health conditions of this Sabatinovka prehistoric community. Moreover, aspects related to dental morphology can contribute to a detailed picture of the genetic diversity and physiological adaptations.

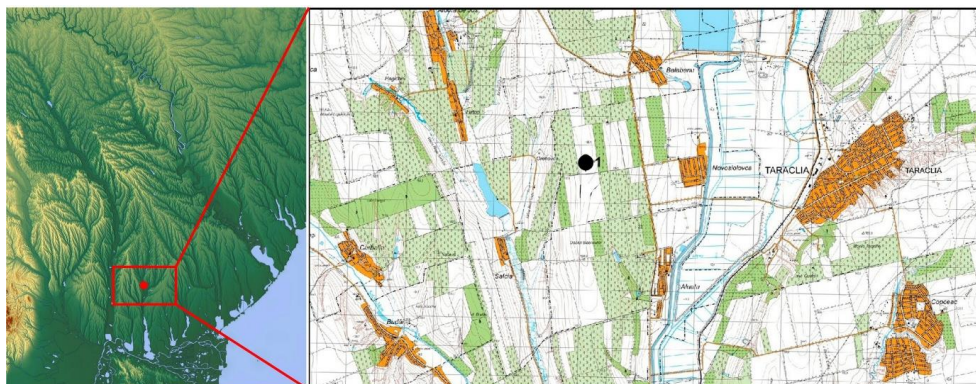


Figure 1. Location of the archaeological site in Republic of Moldova (left side), and detail of Novosiolovca (right side).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The tomb *M5* was identified 10.5 m south-southwest from the central reference point of the tumulus, at a depth of 0.6 m. It had an irregular oval shape and was oriented along the east-west axis; it measured 0.9×0.7 m, with a depth of 0.1 m. The skeleton, coded by the number of the tumulus and that of the tomb as *T9M5*, was found in a crouched position on the right side, with the skull oriented to the east and the arms bent at the elbows and drawn towards the skull (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Tumulus *T9*, tomb *M5*: drawing (left side), and photo (right side) for the skeleton *T9M5*.

The skeleton was assessed for its state of preservation (Bello *et al.*, 2006), degree of representation (Buikstra, 1994), and taphonomic changes (Buikstra, 1994; Schotsmans *et al.*, 2017). Bone preservation was expressed using the Anatomical Preservation Index following the method of Bello *et al.* (2006), where the API is calculated as the average preservation score based on all bones, with each bone categorized into one of six levels, ranging from absent to fully preserved. The study of the skeleton was preceded by bone restoration to allow the methods mentioned below.

Estimations of age at death and sex were performed according to (Brothwell, 1981; Bruzek, 2002; Buikstra, 1994; Schmitt, 2005; Ubelaker, 1989; Walrath *et al.*, 2004). To identify potential anomalies, epigenetic traits, and pathologies, relevant literature was also consulted (Aufderheide, 1998; Ortner, 2003).

The evaluation of dental wear required the preliminary removal of impurities from the tooth surfaces in order to digitize the occlusal surfaces, with the inclusion of a millimeter scale for calibration purposes. The dental wear was assessed using the scoring scale proposed by Smith (1984) for the premolars (P), canines (C) and incisors (I), and by Scott (1979) for the molars (M). The obtained macrowear scores were then categorized on the wear stages proposed by Tomczyk *et al.* (2020): teeth with invisible or very small wear facets, teeth characterized by moderately advanced wear facets, and teeth with highly advanced wear facets. The second molars (M2) were subjected to wear quantitative analysis, performed according to the methodology presented in literature (Galbany *et al.*, 2011; Petraru *et al.*, 2022).

Dental non-metric traits refer to the morphological variations or features observed in teeth, that are not measured using standard metric measurements. Instead, these traits are typically described based on their presence, absence, or expression degree, and they are used in anthropological studies to differentiate populations and individuals. Tooth wear can significantly hinder the identification of dental non-metric traits, as it may erase them, especially those located on the occlusal surfaces of premolars and molars, or on the distolingual surfaces of canines and the lingual surfaces of upper incisors (Fidalgo *et al.*, 2021; Scott and Irish, 2013; Scott and Turner, 1997). The ASUDAS (Arizona State University Dental Anthropology System) classification system was used to evaluate the presence of non-metric dental traits and to assign a score based on their degree of expression. The identified dental traits and their scoring method are presented according to the specialized literature (Table 1).

Table 1

Dental non-metric trait	Teeth	Description	Reference
Mesial or distal accessory cusp	maxillary first premolar (P1)	A small cusp distinctly separated from the major cusps. The score for this cusp ranges from 0 to 3, reflecting where these cusps are located.	Scott, Irish (2017)

Dental non-metric trait	Teeth	Description	Reference
Anterior fovea	mandibular molars	Expression of a groove on the anterior occlusal surface.	Turner (1991)
Hypoconulid or cusp 5	mandibular molars	The score ranges from 0 to 5, from absent (Grade 0) to pronounced expression (Grade 5).	Turner (1991)
Entoconulid, tuberculum sextum or cusp 6	mandibular molars	The score ranges from 0 to 5, from absence (Grade 0) to a markedly larger cusp 6 than cusp 5 (Grade 5).	Scott, Irish (2017)
Groove pattern	mandibular molars	Y – cusp 2 and cusp 3 are in contact; X – cusp 1 and cusp 4 are in contact; + – all four main cusps are in contact in the central fovea.	Gregory, Hellman (1927) Jørgensen (1955)
Roots	all teeth	The number of roots and any potential fusion of the cones.	Scott, Irish (2017) Turner (1991)

Description of analysed non-metric dental traits.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The skeleton *T9M5* is poorly represented and preserved. As a result, estimates of age at death and sex are made with caution. The individual was possibly a female, aged 25–30 years (young adult). The API of 28.33% indicates a class 3 preservation level, which reflects a poor preservation.

The skull is represented by only few fragments of the neurocranium, the right malar bone, and teeth. The recovered postcranial elements include incomplete humeri, femora, tibiae, fibulae, and coxal bones (Figure 3), as well as small fragments of the scapula, vertebrae, ribs, phalanges, ulna, and radius.

Due to the fragmented condition of the bones, biometric data could not be obtained.

The supratrochlear foramen was observed at the distal end of the right humerus (Figure 3f, g). Some researchers consider this feature an atavistic trait (Mahajan, 2011), while others (Singhal and Rao, 2007) attribute it to post-ossification bone atrophy, caused by mechanical pressure from the ulnar olecranon on the supratrochlear area of the humerus. Macroscopic analysis did not reveal any osteopathy.

Traces of ochre are visible on the right malar (Figure 3b) and right femur (Figure 3e). The skeletal remains exhibit striations and postmortem porosities (Figure 3), possibly resulting from action of acidic soil or other taphonomic factors.



Figure 3. Skeleton *T9M5*, ♀, 25-30 years old: a) fragments of neurocranium and the right malar; b) the right malar pigmented with ochre; c) coxal bones (incomplete); d) femora (incomplete), tibiae (incomplete), fibulae (incomplete); e) right femur pigmented with ochre; f) humeri (incomplete); g) supratrochlear foramen at the distal end of the right humerus.

Dental macrowear. The dental material recovered from the *T9M5* skeleton is represented only by three isolated teeth (i.e., maxillary left first premolar – M1, mandibular right second molar M2, and mandibular right third molar – M3). The scoring system shows that all preserved teeth are characterized by moderate advanced wear on the occlusal surface, with scores between 16 and 21 for the molar teeth, and score 4 for the premolar (Figure 4).

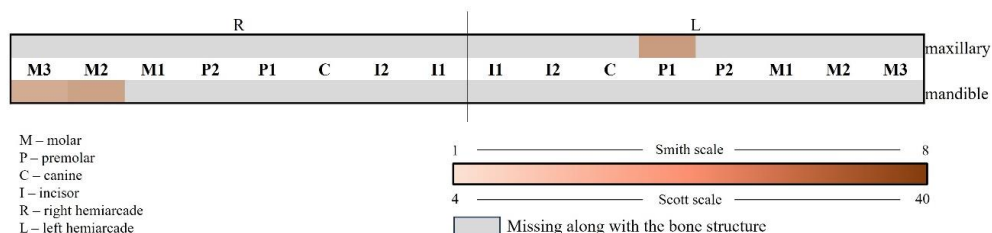


Figure 4. Dental macrowear scores in the *T9M5* skeleton (Sabatinovka Culture).

The right mandibular M2 molar was subjected to image analysis to quantify the percentage of dentine exposure (PDE). The occlusal surface of this molar tooth is characterized by a dentine exposure in percentage of 0.64%. The obtained PDE value for the *T9M5* skeleton was compared with those of a

female dental series previously studied (Petraru *et al.*, 2022) belonging to Noua and Monteoru cultures from Bronze Age. Dental wear is an age-dependent process, therefore all teeth used in the comparison belong to females ranging between 20 and 40 years old. The PDE value of *T9M5* skeleton is located within the interval variation of PDE values used in the comparison for both mandibular and maxillary teeth (Figure 5).

Dental macrowear is in fact a multifactorial process, and in archaeological contexts it can be correlated with abrasiveness of consumed food and storage technique of agricultural products (Petraru and Bejenaru, 2019; Romero *et al.*, 2019). Considering the relatively young age at death of the *T9M5* skeleton belonging to Sabatinovka Culture (i.e., 25–30 years, corresponding to young adult), the occlusal wear is quite advanced, with flattened cusps and dentine exposure. It is considered that dental wear was higher in the past human populations, especially from Prehistory, due to the hard particles within consumed foods, in comparison with more recent peoples (Mays, 2002).

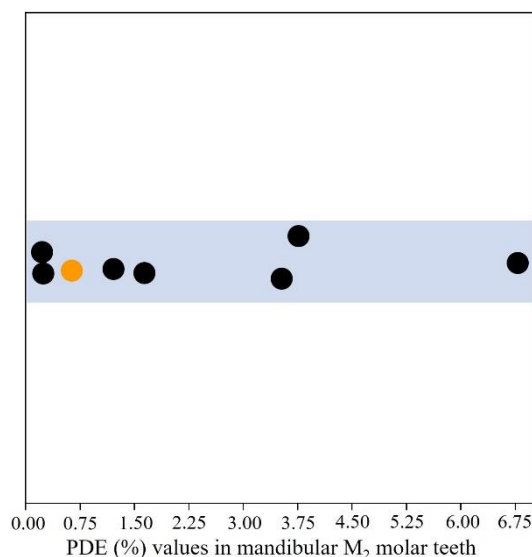


Figure 5. Comparison between the PDE of the mandibular M2 molar belonging to *T9M5* skeleton (yellow dot) and other values belonging to female skeletons (black dots) from other Bronze Age archaeological sites.

Dental nonmetric traits. A limited number of non-metric traits were identified due to the advanced degree of wear on the occlusal surface that also negatively influenced their detailed description.

The right mandibular second molar (M2) exhibited four clearly distinguishable cusps on the occlusal surface: two buccal (protoconid and hypoconid) and two lingual cusps (metaconid and entoconid). The 5th cusp is visible in the distal region, despite the advanced wear. However, no score could be assigned to this cusp, and only its presence was recorded. The Y groove pattern was

observed for this molar, considering the contact area between cusps 2 and 3 in the central fovea (Figure 6c).

The right mandibular third molar (M3) is smaller than the M2, and its occlusal surface has an almost square shape. Four main cusps can be identified, and in the distal area, a secondary intercuspital groove is noticeable, separating cusps 5 and 6 (Figure 6d). Cusps 5 and 6 on M2 and M3 molars are considered variable morphological traits, which are not very common in most human populations. Scott and Turner (1997) mentioned that Europeans have the most distinct profile for four-cusped lower molars, with the highest frequencies worldwide observed for the first (M1, around 10%) and second molars (M2, up to 90%). Cusp 6 (*tuberculum sextum*) exhibits significant geographic variation, making it particularly valuable for biodistance and forensic studies. This trait is relatively rare in European populations, occurring in only 5–15% of individuals. In contrast, it is highly prevalent in Asian populations, with frequencies sometimes exceeding 70%. African populations display moderate frequencies, ranging from 20–40%. The identified cusp 6 in the analysed material can be assigned to class 3, according to the reference system, which states for this classification that the two supplementary cusps (5 and 6) are equal in dimensions. The Y groove pattern was also identified on this third molar (M3).

The expression degree of the anterior fovea could not be assessed for either of the two molars due to advanced wear.

The left maxillary first premolar (P1) exhibits two well-defined cusps on the occlusal surface: the buccal and lingual cusps. The buccal cusp is notably larger and more prominent than the lingual one. In the mesial region, there is a well-defined and pronounced mesial accessory cusp (grade 1) (Figure 6a). Current research indicates that the presence of accessory cusps on maxillary premolars may represent a morphological trait characteristic of Neanderthals (Bailey and Hublin, 2006; HersHKovitz *et al.*, 2016). However, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that have systematically examined the prevalence of this feature in modern human populations. The studies conducted suggest that accessory cusps on premolars play a significant role in differentiating Asian populations from those of African and European origin. Although no reliable geographic pattern has been identified, notable disparities have been observed between Asian populations and those of African and European descent in respect to the manifestation of these dental traits (Adams and George, 2018; Delgado-Burbano, 2007).

The root of this tooth has two cones separated by an inter-radicular projection located in the apical third of the root (Figure 6b). This anatomical feature indicates taurodontism that is a dental anomaly characterized by the absence of constriction at the cemento-enamel junction, and by an elongated pulp chamber with apical displacement of the root bifurcation (Dineshshankar *et al.*, 2014). Taurodontism has been observed in various populations, from Neanderthals to modern humans, being present in approximately 2.5% of adult Caucasians (Jaspers and Witkop Jr, 1980). It can be classified based on the external morphology of the tooth, but a more accurate description requires the use of a radiograph, particularly for the

periapical region. The radiograph is essential for visualizing the internal structure of the premolar and for observing the elongation of the pulp chamber, which is the main characteristic of taurodontism. Based on the external morphology and according to the classification made by Shaw (1928) and Azzaldeen *et al.* (2017), considering the apical displacement of the pulp chamber, the premolar analysed in this study would fall into the mesotaurodon subclass.

This morphological aspect, also noted in a skeleton of Jivotilovka culture, in Early Bronze Age (Popovici *et al.* (2024), highlights dental similarities between the two populations, and could suggest possible continuities or common influences in the teeth variability.

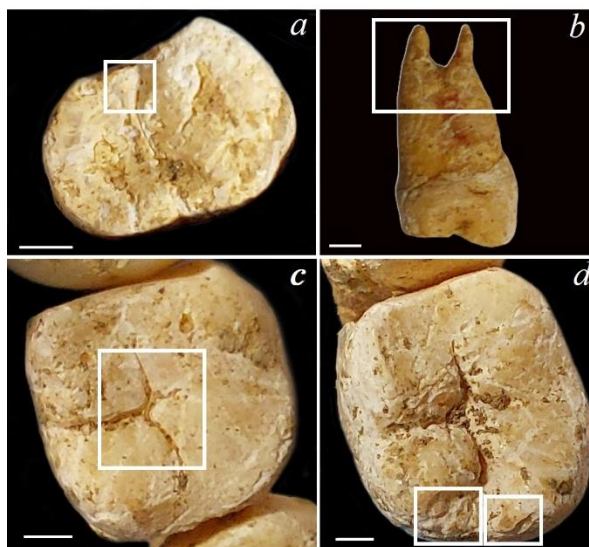


Figure 6. Dental nonmetric traits in the T23M9 skeleton (outlined in frames): a) mesial accessory cusp on maxillary first premolar P1; b) bifurcation of root in maxillary first premolar P1; c) right mandibular second molar M2 with Y groove pattern; d) right mandibular third molar M3 with cusps 5 and 6.

CONCLUSIONS

The bioarchaeological analysis of the T9M5 skeleton (female, 25–30 years at death), belonging to Sabatinovka culture, provides significant insights into the biological features and funerary practices of Late Bronze Age populations.

Despite the poor preservation of the skeletal remains, excluding biometric assessments, the estimations of age at death and sex, as well as evaluation of few teeth (i.e., dental wear, and nonmetric traits) were possible. The advanced dental wear observed suggests a diet incorporating hard particles, while the presence of additional molar cusps (cusps 5 and 6) and potential taurodontism indicate distinct genetic influences within this population.

The detection of ochre traces on the bones could be related to the ritual funerary practices.

These findings contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the lifestyle, dietary habits, and genetic diversity of Sabatinovka communities, offering new perspectives on population dynamics during the Bronze Age.

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REFLECTIONS ON LATE LA TÈNE FUNERARY EXPRESSIONS IN GETIC AND DACIAN CONTEXTS

COSTIN ȘENDROIU¹

Abstract: This article explores the diversity of funerary practices north of the Danube during the Late Iron Age (2nd century BC–1st century AD). Drawing on a theoretical framework, osteological analyses and burial typologies the study highlights the significant variability in funerary behaviour, which reflects complex identity constructions related to age, biological sex, and social status. Particular attention is given to deviant or atypical burials such as subadult individuals in pit fields, communal inhumations, and deposits lacking normative grave features. The absence of a standard funerary model and the fragmentary nature of many burials suggests a high degree of flexibility and diversity. The article contributes to broader debates on the relationship between mortuary practices, social identity, and ritual variability in Iron Age Europe.

Keywords: Funerary practices, La Tène, Iron Age, Dacian, Getic

INTRODUCTION

In Getic and Dacian contexts, starting with the 2nd century BC, the number of funerary discoveries is marked by a sharp decrease, while the discovery contexts show a lack of a clear pattern. Few anthropological studies have been conducted on some burials: Cugir, Alba County (Teleagă *et al.* 2014), Brad, Neamț County (Botezatu, Miu 1980), Lăceni and Orbeasca de Sus, Teleorman County (Botezatu 1977), Orlea, Olt County (Nicolaescu-Plopșor, Rîșcuția 1969), Ocnîța, Vâlcea County (Necrasov, Bălțeanu 1983), Chirnogi, Călărași County (Trohani, Georgescu, Udrescu 1972), Gruiu Dării, Buzău County (Șirbu, Soficaru, Matei 2005), Hunedoara-Grădina Castelului, Hunedoara County (Soficaru, Comșa, Stan 2007), Sighișoara-Valea Dracului, Mureș County (Comșa 2018), Rotbav, Brașov County (Comșa 2015), and Malaja Kopanja, Transcarpathia, Ukraine (Soficaru 2005). Even fewer studies have tried to cover more extensive chronological intervals and regional patterns (Nicolaescu-Plopșor, Wolski 1972; Necrasov, Bălțeanu, Antoniu 1980; Rîșcuția 1980; Comșa 1991). However, most anthropological analyses focus on local contexts, with the interpretive aspect of funerary practices often lacking. The emphasis is placed on describing burial

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contexts without integrating them into a broader interpretive framework. Recently, a doctoral thesis analyzed over 70 individuals from both inhumation and cremation contexts, most of them found in pit graves (Şendroi 2023).

From an archaeological perspective, there are three main studies in the last decades that tried to clarify the changes in the funerary models starting with the 2nd century BC. The three models proposed by Valeriu Sîrbu (1993), Mircea Babeş (1988), and Cătălin Alexandru Popa (2014; 2018) offer distinct frameworks for interpreting funerary practices, reflecting different methodological orientations. Sîrbu aims for an integrative classification of funerary categories but faces challenges due to conceptual ambiguities and reliance on literary sources. Babeş proposes a strict typology focused on formal graves, while Popa employs statistical analysis of grave inventories to identify social patterns within burial data. Each model contributes important analytical tools but also reveals certain limitations when applied to the complexity of funerary contexts. Sîrbu's broad categories risk obscuring the diversity of burial forms, especially when interpretive criteria are unclear. Babeş makes a more structured analysis but may underrepresent funerary variation outside clear necropolis settings. Popa's quantitative approach focused just on the funerary inventories offers insights into the distribution of grave goods and potential social hierarchies, yet it can overlook ritual and symbolic aspects not captured by inventory data alone.

Starting with the 2nd century BC, there are two main burial horizons, one characterised by incineration graves either flat or tumular and another by inhumation burials, mostly in the form of pit graves devoid of inventory which don't follow any particular rules regarding the number of individuals, the state of representation of the skeletons or the age categories. These discoveries come mostly from three sites Grădiştea-Movila Crestată (Brăila County), Orlea-Grindul Iancu Muşat (Olt County) and Sighişoara-Wietenberg (Mureş County). The main exception from this period is the necropolis from Hunedoara-Grădina Castelului where we encounter a greater number of burials, most of them individual and containing subadults, which show certain patterns in the funerary treatment of the deceased as well as funerary inventory. Most of the inhumation burials can be categorized as deviant and are characterized by a marked departure from the funerary models of the earlier period (5th–3rd centuries BC). Their classification as deviant is based primarily on general features as they appear in contexts that are not typical of formal funerary settings. The main criteria considered in identifying such burials is the number of individuals, the position and orientation of the skeleton, the degree of anatomical connection and post-mortem interventions. Starting with the 2nd century BC, in line with the interpretations proposed by Babeş (1988) and Sîrbu (1993), we consider that the tendency toward changes in funerary practices and the marked decrease in funerary discoveries—from the 2nd century BC to their near disappearance in the 1st century AD, can also be attributed to a broader model observed across Iron Age Europe, extending from Britain to the Balkans, where graves become increasingly scarce.

CONTEXT

When considering the dynamics of the North Thracian area beginning in the 2nd century BC, it becomes clear that this period was marked by significant demographic and cultural transformations, largely shaped by various population movements. Notably, the gradual expansion of the PPK group from the Danube toward the inner Carpathian region (Măndescu 2013: 127–129), alongside the migration of Getic groups from the territory of present-day Moldova toward the south (Măndescu 2013: 126), contributed to a heightened degree of interaction between communities with distinct cultural backgrounds and social identities.

This convergence led to a complex process of cultural exchange and adaptation, generating what can be interpreted as an ideological reconfiguration focusing on martial identity, expressed through the funerary inventories in incineration graves, centred around weapons. The resulting ideological model—shaped by the contact, competition, and possibly cooperation among these groups—appears to have gained prominence particularly in the 1st century BC. It was during this time that elements of the identity and elite display practices formed in southwestern Transylvania began to influence the broader Getic world. These influences are observable in both the material culture and funerary customs of the region, suggesting that the ideological model that crystallized in this area extended its reach and was gradually adopted, reinterpreted, or hybridized by neighboring populations giving birth to new identities.

The most numerous funerary contexts for the 2nd century BC–1st century AD are burials in pits. Babeş notes that such deposits are characteristic of the Getic habitation area, with the geographic distribution reflecting regional differences between the Celtic-influenced Dacian zone and the Getic cultural sphere (Babeş 1988: 13–16). Most individuals were buried within settlements, often in refuse pits (in about half of the cases), but also in other features such as household contexts, defensive ditches, isolated pits, pit clusters near settlements, or without a clearly defined context (Sîrbu 1993: 31). The low number of discoveries may reflect certain funerary practices associated with most of the population, that leave no archaeological traces (e.g., exposure, cremation followed by disposal in natural settings). The existing contexts display considerable variability in body position, anatomical connection, and the number of individuals per deposit. In about half the cases, a single skeleton was found in a pit; in others, each deposit contained between two and five individuals. Approximately 40% of the skeletons were found complete. Their arrangement varies widely, with some resembling conventional inhumations (anatomical connections present), while others are in unusual positions. Most were placed at the bottom of the pit (Sîrbu 1993: 31).

Analysis of settlements with pit graves, such as Orlea-Grindul Iancu Muşat, Sighişoara-Wietenberg, and Grădiştea-Movila Crestată, highlights distinct elements compared to other sites where inhumation burials were practiced. All three show multiple types of funerary contexts. At Sighişoara and Orlea, pits contained either multiple individuals or a single individual. At Orlea, three skeletons were found in individual graves, while 14 came from collective contexts. At Sighişoara, two

skeletons were in individual graves and eight in collective ones. At Grădiștea, excepting few isolated adult bones, all burials were individual. Most graves included ceramic fragments, usually broken and found in the fill of the pit (Sîrbu 1986; Horedt, Seraphin 1971; Comșa 1972).

All skeletons found in individual pits belonged to subadults, while collective graves contained a more varied demographic composition. Among the 41 individuals anthropologically analyzed, 43.9% (18 individuals) were adults aged 30 to 40, followed by infants (0–1 year) representing 17.07% (7 individuals), children (1–10 years) at 14.63% (6 individuals), adolescents (10–18 years) at 12.20% (5 individuals), young adults (18–30 years) at 9.76% (4 individuals), and older adults (40+) comprising only 2.44% (1 individual). Regarding sex distribution, the skeletal remains showed a relatively balanced proportion of females (21.9%, 9 out of 41) and males (24.4%, 10 out of 41) (Table 1), with sex indeterminable for four individuals due to poor preservation (Șendroi 2023: 133).

Table 1

Age Group	Count	Percentage (%)	Age Group
Infant (0–1)	7	17.07%	Infant (0–1)
Child (1–10)	6	14.63%	Child (1–10)
Adolescent (10–18)	5	12.20%	Adolescent (10–18)
Young Adult (18–30)	4	9.76%	Young Adult (18–30)
Adult (30–40)	18	43.90%	Adult (30–40)
Older Adult (40+)	1	2.44%	Older Adult (40+)

Age distribution of the individuals from the fields of pits

Pathological analysis shows a low incidence of skeletal pathologies, with no significant associations between types of pathological conditions. Among the 41 individuals coming from pit graves, porotic hyperostosis manifested as *cribra cranii* and *cribra orbitalia* was observed in 14% of the skeletons. Dental pathologies, such as caries or ante-mortem tooth loss, were found in 13.5% of cases, exclusively among adults. A correlation was found between dental pathologies and individuals with high levels of osteoarthritis, especially in the lower limbs. All individuals with dental issues also exhibited osteoarthritis, two males and three females, all aged between 30–40 years. The presence of osteoarthritis suggests intense physical activity throughout life, while dental pathology may be linked to aging or poor diet quality, even though overall dental health was relatively good. Osteoperiostitis was observed only in mild forms, affecting few bones with no evidence of active infections at the time of death (Șendroi 2023: 132).

The discoveries from the site at Hunedoara-Grădina Castelului stand out among contemporary funerary contexts due to the large number of burials, most of which belong to sub-adult individuals. The bodies were deposited on a layer of limestone and subsequently covered with stones. The absence of overlapping graves may suggest the existence of surface markers for identifying burial locations. The best-represented age group is that of *Infans* I (children under 1 year of age). The cemetery lacks a consistent burial pattern, both in terms of the number of individuals per grave (ranging from one to six) and in terms of body position. Regarding age, most individuals (35 out of 52) were under 6 years old, one was between 7 and 14 years, and thirteen were over 14 years (Soficaru, Comşa, Stan 2007: 85–106).

The degree of skeletal preservation indicates that in 25 cases, bones from all anatomical segments were present, while 22 cases contained only isolated fragments. Most deposits (12) included both complete and fragmentary skeletons, representing 31 individuals (Sîrbu *et al.* 2007: 170–171). Overall, preservation was generally good, with bones from all anatomical regions typically present. There are no signs of disarticulation or post-mortem manipulation. The disproportionately high number of *Infans* I burials compared to other age categories suggests a distinct post-mortem treatment for this demographic group. The disturbed condition of the remains is likely due to the young age at death. The grave goods are generally diverse, including personal adornments (fibulae, rings, pendants, bracelets) and some weapons (knives, lanceheads, arrowheads), but ceramics are generally absent.

Several tumular cremation necropolises typically located near major *davae* are interpreted in the literature as belonging to an aristocratic class. Most of these are found near fortified centers in Muntenia (e.g., Popeşti; Vulpe 1976: 192–215), Transylvania (e.g., Cugir; Rustoiu 2015: 349–362; Teleagă *et al.* 2014: 293–318), and Moldova (e.g., Poiana, Brad, Răcăţău; Ursachi 1986; Căpitanu 1982). These funerary complexes feature specific architectural elements: burnt layers at the base of tumuli at Poiana and Popeşti, or stone platforms at Cugir. The tumuli were erected either directly over the pyre or at a separate location (Sîrbu 1993: 22–23). Grave goods in these tumuli are generally centred around weapons. A special case is Tumulus 2 at Cugir, where the individual was buried with a ceremonial chariot pulled by two horses, a riding horse, and a full set of military equipment: (Rustoiu 2015: 349–362; Teleagă *et al.* 2014: 293–318). Personal adornments consist mainly of iron fibulae, glass beads, rings, pendants, buckles, and bracelets, occasionally accompanied by small gold items. The pottery found in tumular graves is typically fragmentary and includes Greek amphorae, fruit stands, cups, and relief-decorated bowls (Sîrbu 1993: 23). Flat cremation graves, aside from those in Oltenia, are poorly represented and generally consist of isolated burials, except at Zimnicea (Alexandrescu 1980: 19–126).

These burials exhibit a funerary pattern characterized by a hierarchical structure in the distribution of martial grave goods (Popa 2018: 181–182). The funerary model indicates that osteological fragments most often derive from a wide range of anatomical regions, with the most frequently represented skeletal elements

being cranial remains and fragments of long bone diaphyses. The overall quantity of bone is usually very small. Even in cases where the total amount is larger—measured in hundreds of grams—the condition of the material is highly fragmentary. Due to this fragmentation, precise determinations of the sex and age of the deceased could not be carried out. Across the entire analyzed assemblage of cremated remains, only adult individuals could be identified, though age estimation was limited to broad categories. As for sex determination, it was not possible for the vast majority of the graves examined (Şendroi 2023: 137).

DISCUSSION

We propose that specific funerary practices characterized the burials at Hunedoara as well as those from Orlea, Sighişoara, and Grădiştea. A key factor influencing the treatment of the deceased in these contexts appears to be the social age of the individuals (Sofaer 2006, 119) with some of them being subadult. The burial practices at Hunedoara and those within pit fields reflect distinct identity models, suggesting two divergent funerary traditions (Şendroi 2023: 144). While the Hunedoara burials demonstrate a structured pattern in terms of deposition, treatment, and grave goods, the pit burials reveal a contrasting approach. The latter often feature carelessly deposited bodies, frequently lacking anatomical connection, which may indicate post-mortem disturbance.

This differentiation in treatment may reflect not only social status but also specific ritual frameworks or identity constructions related to the individual or group. The consistent occurrence of sub-adults in individual burials within pit fields supports the hypothesis of differentiated treatment based on age. Newborns are commonly interred either alone or alongside another individual consistently identified as female in the anthropological analyses suggesting mother-infant burials that may reflect maternal and neonatal mortality during childbirth (Şendroi 2023: 144).

In terms of communal inhumation graves, females are predominantly represented, while males are found exclusively in such contexts. This suggests a gender-specific funerary behavior associated with communal burial practices. These individuals do not seem to have been subjected to normative funerary treatment, but rather a distinct though not necessarily deviant form of burial. Osteological analysis does not reveal major pathological indicators or morphological anomalies that would reflect differences in health status or living conditions. The lack of distinctive skeletal markers among females further complicates the interpretation of their social roles or identities (Şendroi 2023: 137).

As such, defining a primary funerary model for inhumation graves remains problematic due to the insufficient sample size. It is likely that many individuals received highly specific treatments that have left little or no archaeological trace, especially among adults. Among sub-adults, inhumation appears to dominate, but variability in grave forms and associated behaviors whether in pit fields or in

necropolises such as Hunedoara-Grădina Castelului suggests complex identity constructions beyond chronological age.

The treatment and presentation of the body after death constitute a central axis for interpreting social identity. As Turner (1984) argues, the human body is a crucial medium through which various aspects of identity social, religious, gendered, or age-related are constructed and communicated (Thurston 2009: 400).

Archaeological literature concerning Late La Tène funerary practices north of the Danube has seen several attempts to develop theoretical frameworks for such findings. Babeş (1988: 15) contended that many inhumations should not be interpreted as formal graves. He also raised the possibility of human sacrifice, interpreting these individuals as potential outsiders or social marginals killed in rituals dedicated to a war deity. However, no signs of perimortem trauma was found on individuals coming from these contexts during the anthropological analyses. This interpretation implicitly frames such individuals as marginal and suggests that normative funerary practices may have been reserved for others. However, designating these individuals as marginal lacks solid basis, especially in the absence of a clearly established normative burial standard and considering the good general health inferred from their skeletal remains (Şendroi 2023: 148). It is plausible that these individuals received special funerary treatment linked to a specific social identity, which does not necessarily equate with marginality but may instead reflect distinct social roles or positions.

Regarding inhumation graves, Babeş observed that human remains are often discovered in waste pits within settlements. The bones here generally display low anatomical connection and fragmentary representation, frequently just cranial fragments or long bones being discovered (Babeş 1988: 15). The poor preservation and representation of the skeletons in these contexts likely results from specific post-mortem handling practices. This is evidenced by the presence of animal gnawing marks on some bones and the incomplete state of most of the studied skeletons, indicating a complex post-mortem treatment that may have included exposure to scavengers or deliberate dismemberment (Şendroi 2023: 121). This scenario implies a succession of interventions, a situation that may also have been present in other discoveries from the period. Additionally, we can hypothesize that the retrieval of individuals took place several days after death or that excarnation occurred through exposure, which could explain the presence of the gnawing marks on some of the bones. The blurring of public and private ritual practices during the Iron Age further complicates these interpretations. In La Tène communities, an absence of a strict division between social and ritual aspects is suggested (Bradley 2003: 12).

Şirbu (1993), discussing “non-cremated human bones from non-funerary contexts,” proposed that such pit burials whether partial or complete, individual or collective may represent low-status individuals, such as slaves or outsiders, who did not share the social standing of those buried in cremation graves. He also posited that human sacrifice or dismemberment after exposure might explain the poor anatomical preservation. However, his interpretations rely heavily on

historical sources (Teleagă *et al.* 2014: 308) and fall short of offering a robust empirical foundation. As presented above, the continued emphasis on sacrificial interpretations lacks substantial osteological evidence (Şendroi 2023: 94).

The analysis of funerary typologies proposed so far has highlighted the limitations of traditional models in capturing the diversity and complexity of funerary discoveries from this chronological interval. The rigidity of certain classifications, the tendency to impose explanations, and the overemphasis on specific criteria (such as human sacrifices, the distribution of grave goods or assumed ethnic correlations) have led to incomplete interpretations of funerary practices. In conclusion while these typologies provide important reference points for the systematization of archaeological material, they fail to adequately reflect the variability and dynamics of funerary rituals.

Therefore, a reassessment is required regarding how the theoretical framework is defined and applied, taking into account the contextual particularities of each site and the multiple cultural influences. Furthermore, the critique of existing models underscores the need for an integrated approach one that combines spatial analysis of burials, osteological studies, and quantitative methodology, while also attending to the symbolic and social dimensions of the funerary phenomenon.

CONCLUSIONS

An interpretive possibility regarding changes in identity expression relates to the emergence of new forms of social organization. Earlier funerary traditions within the Carpathian basin were displaced, possibly due to a shift in identity expression beginning in southwestern Transylvania with the migration of the PPK group. Additionally, there is evidence of a decline in funerary traditions and a decrease of grave goods, sometimes entirely absent in later contexts (Sîrbu 2008, 86). Recent theoretical advancements have seen renewed debates about the relationship between identity in life and in death, as well as the correlation between individual prestige during life and its reflection in funerary constructions. One issue that raises questions about the expression of prestige involves ancestral cults. Throughout the Iron Age, contexts containing multiple individuals or monumental graves with exceptional inventories are often interpreted as expressions of ancestral affiliation and elite lineage claims (Thurston 2009, 370).

Assuming that both tumular and flat cremation graves containing martial inventories represent the normative funerary standard of the period—being the only contexts that consistently exhibit the classical features of formal burial—then the deviant inhumation contexts, often located within the same settlements as cremation burials, must necessarily reflect a different funerary model and an alternative approach to identity construction. In this regard, concepts such as hegemonic masculinity as defined by Connell (2006) and the model of masculine habitus proposed by Ramsel (2020) become particularly relevant.

One of the primary challenges in discussing inhumed individuals lies in the difficulty of establishing a clear funerary model. A significant degree of variability is

observed, which seems to correlate both with regional geographic criteria and with identity-driven practices. One hypothesis posits that individuals interred in pits occupied a marginal social status. However, anthropological analysis has not revealed pathological conditions in the majority of these individuals, nor any other markers that might indicate a lower political or social embodiment. There are no signs suggesting a marginal lifestyle, as their general health appears to have been good.

It is thus plausible to argue that the message conveyed by these deviant pit burials is distinct from that expressed by normative funerary practices. The central question, however, is: what constituted the funerary standard during this period? Based on the current state of research, cremation graves emerge as the most representative, both in quantitative terms and through the consistency of their burial patterns—particularly with respect to the associated grave goods. This consistency distinguishes them as representative, at least for a specific social segment. All in all, the low number of funerary contexts dated between 2nd century BC–1st century AD might imply that the funerary standard for most of the population did not leave archaeological traces.

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ASPECTS OF NON-FORMAL ORGANIZATION OF INTRA-ETHNIC COHABITATION IN GREECE (WITH A SHORT COMPARISON WITH ROMANIA AND TURKEY). THE EVRITES' ASSOCIATIONS

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Abstract: Usually, the concept of “cohabitation” involves the existence of some groups with a significant and enough big difference between them so as tensions might appear at any time. The inter-ethnic cohabitation is one of the most familiar instances of living together phenomenon. But the concept can be used intra-ethnically too. In Greece, this latter meaning of cohabitation can be surprised also in the co-existence of innumerable cultural associations. Many of them were founded by internal (or external, but intra-ethnic) migrants, and bear names which refer to a place/region of origin. The teaching of dance and traditions from this place are their main activities. The text displays some aspects regarding intra-ethnic cohabitation in Greece by taking into account the case of five “Evrític” associations (from the cities of Sérres, Dhráma, Kavála, Xánthi, and Komotiní). “Evrítes” are actual migrants or their descendants from Évros prefecture – situated at the border with Turkey – in these cities. Comparatively, both in Romania and Turkey the situation of non-formal organization of cohabitation (through the existence of a strong NGO sector of cultural associations) is feebler. In return, a more pronounced formal organization is to be found in Romania, most of the cultural-ethnological institutions being founded and regulated by the state.

Keywords: cohabitation, cultural association, Evrites, intra-ethnic, multicultural, non-formal organization

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The paper that follows was written in the wake of my participation to the annual conference of the Ethnological Sciences Association from Romania [ASER]², the 2023 edition. The topic of the conference was “Towards an Ethnology of a (Good) Cohabitation” – *Pentru o etnologie a (bunei) conviețuir[i]*, in Romanian language. So, I translated the Romanian term having a Latin origin *conviețuire* with “cohabitation”, a term often used in international literature written in English language. It could have been translated “living together” also. Both variants are used for a lot of hypostases of living together. Recently, two particular uses have gained more traction: the cohabitation of partners as an alternative to

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marriage (Dahal, 2020; Scott, 2004, etc.), and of some groups with specific cultures/ subcultures (Botturi, 2019; Dine, 2021, etc.).

Both by topic and place (the town of Bistrița, Romania), the conference of the ASER in November 2023 took into account the second hypostasis. The place especially makes one think to the second hypostasis, as long as Bistrița is one of the Romania's cities characterized by a secular living together of several ethnic groups. The present study is to deploy itself in the key of cohabitation of groups.

In this frame, it is to be noticed that the use of the term "cohabitation" and of its associates is more frequent – if not exclusive – in contexts where the differences between groups in contact are sufficiently big that anytime to constitute the source of some tensions and conflicts. In order to diminish this potential, theoretical thinking and political ideologies from the contemporary Western space evolved to a positive valorisation of *diversity*. This evolution seems to be rather an *a priori* necessary answer taking into account the unseen by now degree in which heterogeneous groups get into contact. *Migration* is by and large the main cause at present for such contacts and their augmentation. On this background, we are by John W. Berry (2018) in a situation in which "[t]here is probably no more serious challenge to attaining social stability and cohesion in the contemporary world than the management of relations within culturally plural societies".

A pioneer in the efforts of properly managing such relations was Canada – one of the countries with a long and intense tradition of immigration. This happened in the decades of 1960 and 1970 by the political solution of *multiculturalism* (Eriksen, 2015: 28–29; Taylor, 2012). In the Québec region of Canada, the citizens of which are attached by the French language and a certain historic identity, the multiculturalism takes the aspect of *interculturality*. Regarding the relation between the two strands, the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor (2012: 416) says that "if multiculturalism in the generic sense includes policies which aim both at recognition of difference and integration, one might argue that the prefix 'multi' gives greater weight to the first goal – acknowledging diversity – while 'inter' invokes more the facet of integration". The same philosopher considers that the situation in Europe is more like the situation in Québec than that in the rest of Canada, so that the simple multiculturalism is not an adequate answer to the problems posed by migration on the European continent. The reference from the ASER conference topic to "good cohabitation" bears without doubt the ideological premises of interculturality.

Traditionally, the cultural pluralism is associated with ethnic pluralism. However, Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2002 [1993]: 36) claims that the foundations of ethnic identity do not necessarily relate to the sharing of a (unique) culture. More than that, in an analysis of Chandran Kukathas (2017: 414), it is showed that "in many cases the differences within national minorities may turn out to be greater than the differences between some members of national minorities and those of immigrant ethnic minorities". Urban Australian aborigines, for example, find themselves in this situation in their relation with aborigines from far away rural communities, on one hand, and immigrant cultural minorities still not fully assimilated cohabiting in

mainstream urban society, on the other. The largest number of contributions regarding the lack of equivalence between the ethnic and cultural identity are brought in the last decades by Marxist thinking and the left one generally. According to the (neo)Marxist methodological paradigm, a society does not have to be studied as and homogenous entity, but as a whole composed by classes, categories, minorities, etc., each component being liable to give birth to its own cultural complex. The thing is as the more evident as it was called into question the problem of some rights which to have as a referent not the society in its entirety, but some segments of it: women, sexual minorities, religious minorities, etc.

One of the consequences of these evolutions for anthropology and sociology – by my knowledge unnoticed as such in the scientific literature – is the extension of the field for *ethnicity* studies. Thus, if in the classical manner “ethnicity” is a concept with an inter-ethnic referent (the expression of a large academic echo “ethnic boundaries” [Barth, 1969] being thus fully ontologically grounded), nowadays one can consider an as justified as *intra-ethnic* referent.³ Personally, I have utilized it in the last manner in several studies (Ștefănuță, 2018; 2019, etc.). The present study adds to these, as the title already informs the reader.

THE MULTICULTURALITY ON AN INTRA-ETHNIC CRITERION IN GREECE

The profile and dynamics of relations in actual Greek society are strongly influenced by migratory episodes from the last century. Among these, inside the thematic frame of cohabitation two of them are of a great importance: (1) the arrival of “refugees” [πρόσφυγες] from Turkey and Bulgaria, in the context of conflicts between Greece and the two states in the first decades of the twentieth century, a migration that was in the end politically certified by agreements of population change. The event is one of the big forced migrations in the history of the last century. It is estimated that roughly 1,500,000 Greeks/ orthodox Christians were forced to leave the Ottoman/ Turk territory (Τσουνάκος [Tsunákos], 2010 [1992]: 42) and to reach for Greece, and over 500,000 Muslims/ Turks⁴ (Αργίδου⁵, *apud* Μαλκίδης [Malkidis], 105) to go in the opposite direction; (2) the internal migration due to economic reasons from the middle of 1950 decade till the middle

³ It has to be mentioned that religion or race were considered sources of ethnicity in their own right. Milton M. Gordon, in *Assimilation in American Life* (1964), gives the next explication: “When I use the term ‘ethnic group’, then, to refer to a type of group contained within the national boundaries of America, I shall mean by it any group which is defined or set off by race, religion, or national origin, or some combination of these categories” (p. 27). It is no allusion here at the differentiation *inside* the ethnic group; the reference is at the ethnic groups as such, no matter on what basis, the ethnicity of which has meaning, of course, in the inter-ethnic key.

⁴ As one may notice, the ethnic criterion was strongly crossed by religious one. The consequence was that Muslims groups but not of Turkish origin were forced to leave for Turkey. For example, the Meglen-Vlachs of Muslim religion from Nânta (today Notia, Pella prefecture, cca. 100 km north-east of Thessalonica).

⁵ Δ. Αργίδου [D. Eghídu], 1934, *Η Ελλάδα χωρίς πρόσφυγες* [The Greece without Refugees], Αθήναι, p. 191.

of 1970 decade (*cf.* Kasimis *et al.*, 2012). The last one meant the exodus of rural population to urban areas; it is to be noticed that the metropolitan centres of Athens and Thessalonica presently gather cca. 50% of all Greece population (amounting to 11,000,000 inhabitants).

The populations that arrived in Greece in the second and especially third decade of the twentieth century, although with an ethnic Greek imprint, were not at all cultural homogenous. The Pontics (arrived from Pontus, situated at the south of the Black Sea), Micro-Asians (arrived from the Turkish seaside of the Aegean Sea), Thracians (arrived from Bulgaria), etc. exhibited clear cultural differences, both inter-categorically, and towards the indigenous populations with which were to live together. On their side, the last ones did not have the same cultural profile either, some of them speaking different languages – Slavic, Latin, etc. In this context, it is to be noticed, for example, the significant proportion of Vlach population. On this background, today, as in the period of refugees' arrival and their installation, it is extremely difficult to select a population category of "authentic" Greeks on an ethnological criterion.

The later internal migration complicates even more the situation, deepening the mixing of population categories, which until the 1950 years preserved themselves cultural and demographic unaltered. Still since the 1990 years, the identity mixture as a result of marital changes is the rule in the northern half of Greece, the Macedonia region (Αγγελόπουλος [Angelópulos], 1997: 107). The paradox is that this phenomenon is not accompanied by an equivalent identity dilution. In the course of my fieldwork, the interlocutors sooner or later legitimated themselves by a reference to a precisely delineated on an ethnological criterion population category.

Therefore, the reality of actual Greek society is that of some co-existing and interpenetrating cultures and subcultures (*cf.* Yinger, 1960: 626, the wright column). The field activity in some places from Central Macedonia region, Eastern Macedonia and Thrace region respectively, but also based on other methods, reveals the fact that an ethnic imprint entirely different by the Greek one have the populations of Vlachs (Aromanians and Meglenites – without to be noticed in their case the existence of a Romanian ethnic consciousness⁶) and Muslim minority (the only one with a political recognition in Greece, being composed in its majority by Turks inhabiting the western Thrace, whose ancestors were excluded from the population change between Greece and Turkey in 1923⁷).

However, what is the belief in the name of which a lot of other population categories with obvious cultural differences claim to be ethnic-identitary Hellenic? On which bases these differences have the significance of *intra*-ethnic boundaries? I shall try a short explanation focusing on the relationship between *rátsa* [ράτσα] and *fyli* [φυλή], as this could be understand in the wake of fieldwork observations.

⁶ These populations are considered by Romanian scholars as speaking dialects of the old Romanian language.

⁷ Certified by *Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations*, and respectively *Treaty of Peace with Turkey*.

The relationship is difficult to be clarified with precision, the two terms often being used in an interchangeable manner. That is why the explanation maintains – *volens nolens* – a hypothetical character. Thus, the categories taken into account consider themselves *fylés*, “filiations” of the same *rátsa*, “race” of origin. *Rátsa*, though, does not seem to have a biological referent; the “filiations” do not have the ontology of some descents from *biological* common ancestors, but from ancestors *who inhabited the same territory* (cf. Grosby, 2022: 23). The intra-ethnic identity architectonic is even more complex. *Fylés* might be grouped, integrated and cohabit also at the levels not as general as *rátsa*, how it will be the case further.

The described situation has some similarities with that from English language speaking Canada. Its management by the Greek state has – like in Canada – the aspect of a “*de facto* multiculturalism”, inside of which “[t]he individual rights and liberties protected by the constitutions of liberal states have allowed immigrants [and not only to them, *my note*, S.Ş.] *qua* individuals to find recognition and protection for their distinct cultural practices” (Joppke and Morawska, 2003: 8). In the same time, it is about a liberal multiculturalism, where the state does not impose “duties to maintain any particular identity and way of life”, but is careful to provide “fair opportunities to freely pursue culture-related interests” (Kymlicka, 2017: 1). This orientation does not have as a necessary consequence the political recognition of some minorities, and is echoed in Hellenic political thinking (for example, Filímon Peonídis supports an liberal egalitarianism according to which does not exist any special collective right that is not possible to be derived from human universal rights [Παονίδης, 1997]; if so, the explicit providing by the state of such rights is redundant).

METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

The present paper was made using the methodological instruments of social and cultural anthropology. The cabinet phase, in all its forms, is taken for granted, so I shall not insist upon it. Some details regarding the fieldwork are to be exposed. This is a part of a wider fieldwork, undertaken in some places of the Greek regions already mentioned, being deployed in several stages with a different length spread along more than a decade (the first of them, introductive in the specific of anthropological research, lasted seven and a half months), and by using the Greek language. The fieldwork corresponds to a research interest having as a thematic background the nowadays general identity phenomenon at the Greek populations subjected to population transfer and changing processes a century ago. More precisely, for the present study, the fieldwork period was between 31st October and 4th November 2023. I mainly conducted semi-structured interviews with the presidents of the five cultural associations of “Evrites”. The associations will be introduced below. Both during the fieldwork, before and after that, Stéfanos Miltsakákis [Στέφανος Μιλtsακάκης] (59 years old), the president of Evrites from Kavála, played the role of a key informant and was the person who facilitated the contact with the presidents of the other associations. The field also meant some

sessions of observation at activities performed by association from Kavála, and one session at each of the associations from Sérres, Xánthi and Komotiní. The record in detail of field activity was made in fieldwork diary that was kept on this occasion.

NON-FORMAL ORGANIZATION OF INTRA-ETHNIC COHABITATION IN GREECE. EVRITES' ASSOCIATIONS

Some conceptual clarifications: the *non-formal organization* of cohabitation is related to the existence and co-existence of *cultural* associations whose main goal is the intra-ethnic identity preservation; in other words, it is alluded here the non-governmental sector (NGO). Usually, the actors in NGO sector support interests other than their own. The associations as implied here support their own interest. But legally they are one and the same thing, so I treat them as equivalent. The *formal organization* involves the active intervention of the state by setting up by governmental initiative – both at the central and local level of governance – of some cultural centres and assemblies, the political recognition of some minorities, etc. The *informal level* of cohabitation is that of day by day relations between the groups and persons living together.⁸ Whereas non-formal organization has a state regulation, the informal level is natural, functioning according to some moral norms permanently negotiated between the cohabiting parts.

The end of military dictatorship („Junta”, 1967–1974), and the governance of Greece in the decade of 1980 by socialists ruled by Andréas Papandréu, created a favourable framework for proliferation from then on of *cultural associations*. They are often titled *politistikí sýllogi* [πολιτιστικοί σύλλογοι] (sg.: *politistikós sýllogos*). Almost every settlement in Greece, no matter how small is, has (at least) one cultural association. In the case of bigger cities (as is Kavála too, with a population of about 80,000 inhabitants), these associations may be dozens. Associations may gather hundreds of members, sometimes even more; for example, the Pontics' Association from Xánthi Prefecture [Σύλλογος Ποντίων Νομού Ξάνθης], headquartered in city of Xánthi, amounts to one thousand *active* members.⁹ In the same time, statal set up cultural centers and assemblies are almost non-existent.

The main activity for these associations is initiation in traditional popular dance. The dance is also the primary form of their participation to public manifestations; not without reason, the dance representing one of the most powerful identity “preservatives”, and the music-dance complex is a very efficient identity ambassador. It is to be noticed that the identity functions of dance are one of the common topics of anthropological researches preoccupied by dance.¹⁰

⁸ The three terms – *formal*, *non-formal* and *informal* – were introduced by an analogy with their meaning in pedagogy, as forms of education (see, for example, Cucoș, 2006: 45–48).

⁹ Information from Spártakos M. Tanasídis, the vice president of this association.

¹⁰ See, for example, on the site of European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) the list with abstracts for the workshop nr. 46 “Meaning in Motion: Advancing the Anthropology of Dance”, coordinated by Jonathan Skinner and Hélène Neveu Kringelbach, in the frame of the 8th EASA Biennial Conference, Vienna, 2004.

Particularly active are the associations of migrants – of their descendants, more precisely – corresponding to the two migratory episodes mentioned before. In order to illustrate some aspect of intra-ethnic cohabitation in Greece in its non-formal organization, alluding however to the inter-ethnic one too, I shall consider the case of “Evritic” associations, namely associations of some internal migrants on economic criterion. The main source of the descriptions which follow is the interviews with the associations’ presidents. I shall structure my intention on two parts: of the aspects of cohabitation inside the associations and in their relationship with other associations.

The aspects of cohabitation inside the Evrites’ associations

The Evrites’ associations are non-governmental formations of migrants from the prefecture (regional unity) of Évros – the eastern limit (the Évros river) of which is in the same time the terrestrial boundary with Turkey – in the capitals of other four prefecture of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace Region and in the capital of a prefecture belonging to Central Macedonia Region as follows¹¹:

- Evrites’ Association from Rhodopes Prefecture [Σύλλογος Εβριτών Νομού Ροδόπης], in Komotini, founded in 1994, having 600 de members;
- Evrites’ Association from Xánthi Prefecture [Σύλλογος Εβριτών Νομού Ξάνθης], in Xánthi, 1996, 400 members;
- Evrites’ Association from Dhráma Prefecture “Έβρος” [Σύλλογος Εβριτών Νομού Δράμας “Ο Έβρος”], in Dhráma, 2006, 400 members;
- Evrites’ Association from Kavála Prefecture “Έβρος” [Σύλλογος Εβριτών Νομού Καβάλας “Ο Έβρος”], in Kavála, 1983, 250 members;
- Evrites’ Association from Sérres Prefecture [Σύλλογος Εβριτών Νομού Σερρών], in Sérres, 2009, 300 members.

By Stéfanos Miltsakákis, the president of association from Kavála, the association “was founded in 1983 [...] out of the need [of persons from Évros] to be in contact, to talk, to speak their own language, to talk about their own traditions, to dance their own dances, essentially to meet each other”. Both in Kavála and in the other cities, the founders are white collar individuals – office workers, teachers, attorneys, etc. Interesting enough, the associations do not create an artificial identity; these are the formalization of a state of facts already existing. Thus, the Evrites distinguish themselves as a certain category in the population of host cities, likewise being the case of Cretans, of those migrants who have come from Peloponnese, etc. The Évros has the significance of a *rátσα*, being an umbrella identity term for a lot of *fylés*, grouped in two categories: (1) of *natives* [ντόπιοι], without including here Pomaks, Sarakatsans and Gagauz peoples; and (2) of *refugees* [πρόσφυγες], included being here those Greek populations arrived in

¹¹ Following their geographical placement from east to west.

Έβρος in the time of the first migratory episode alluded before – arrived from northern Thrace (in Bulgaria today), eastern Thrace (belonging to Turkey), Pontus (Turkey), Minor Asia (understanding here the Turkish seacoast of Aegean Sea) –, and also the Arvanites transferred from eastern Thrace, with Illyrian roots.

For at least three of the Evrites' associations, a condition in their initial statutes for the enrollment of a member was to have Evritic roots. The population mixing, the propensity of higher educated young "Evrites" to migrate in the West, the leaving the scene due to ageing or death by some permanent members, created the necessity of associations "openness" (in the local terminology) to members without Evritic origins. The openness is not quite lacked of conditions: at Sérres and Kavála, a person has to participate some years in one of the association' activities – usually at dance courses – before the enrollment in association; at Xánthi, the statute stipulates that "spouses and adult children" without Evritic provenance may be enrolled (*Καταστατικό*, Αρθρό 3^ο). Moreover, the non-Evritic members are allowed to take part in the administrative apparatus: at Kavála, among the seven members of administrative board, two are non-Evritic; at Xánthi, the secretary, etc.

The activity of associations incorporates dance courses and workshops, choir, theatre, painting, etc. Most of them relate to *παράδοση*, "tradition". By preserving and promoting of tradition, the identity proclivities of Evrites' associations are (even more) evident. By Ghiórgchos Pehlivanídis, the president of association from Xánthi, not only Evrites but generally "Greeks with these things survived in the period of four-five hundred years under the bondage of Turks". Especially the popular dance (*χορός*) has a high prestige and focuses all the energies of an association. The garments – the more these stem from their originary place, the better – with which the dancers are dressed while dancing on the stage, are the most valuable assets of an association. Especially the female clothes, which are classified not so much after *fylí* – as therefore representative for a certain population – as after their place of provenance: from Kavaklí [Καβακλί, today in Bulgaria], from Metaxádes [Μεταξάδες, mentioning that the male counterpart is representative for Έβρος region generally], from Karotí [Καρωτή], etc. Dance instructors are key personalities in an association. Their prestige and competence has an essential role for attending to dance courses and for attracting new members in an association. The instructors must know and teach dances from all over the Greece, because the same "openness" is also valid for dance. "All the Evrites' associations teach dances which are not only from Έβρος. Apart from dances from Thrace generally, it is possible to be taught dances from the islands of Aegean Sea, from Epirus region, from Crete, it is a bigger horizon" (Hrístos Hatzipému, the president of association from Komotini). Thus, it is not considered only *kuluriastós* [κουλουριαστός], *baidúska* [μπαϊντούσκα], etc. – choreographic species which are danced in the Έβρος region. The collective events, especially weddings where the spouses are not from the same ethnological category,¹² are occasions for different *fylés* to meet each other, so it is necessary that participants to be able to perform dances from different regions.

¹² Taking into account the intensity of mixtures from the last decades, it is increasingly possible that grooms not to have from the start a pure ethnological identity, but a hybridized one.

The cohabitation inside the Evrites' associations is not only intra-ethnic, but inter-ethnic too. That is, among their members or attendees to the activities might be found some persons who belong to other than Hellenic *fylés*: at Sérres, three Bulgarian women who married locally; in Dhráma, Bulgarian and Albanian women, likewise, inhabiting in Greece for many years. Moreover, one of association' vice presidents is a woman of Bulgarian origin; in Komotiní, women from Romania, Georgia, Russia, Armenia sing in the choir, and there are local Muslims¹³ who follow dance courses, etc.

The continuity decades on end of an association as those of Evritic type is maybe the most relevant indicator of a good cohabitation inside the association, and in its turn a "non-formal" indicator of cohabitation generally. The parts who contribute to this result are, on one hand, the members of association, on the other hand, the leadership of association.

"... I became a member of association in 1993. My dilemma always was how these associations survive, and I noticed after many years as a member of administrative apparatus – I was president for at least twelve years, and member of administrative board for another three – that this associations are kept alive by their own members" (Stéfanos Miltsakákis, Kavála).

The "keeping alive" is related both with the intense implication of the members of association in its functioning and activities, and financial support given by them, their contributions representing the main financial resource of the association.

The leadership of the association has also a significant role; the implication of president must be total (to the point when, if it is needed, to put the association before any personal interest).

"For me, Sebastian, here is all my life! It is as a house of mine, that is why I named [the association's headquarters] «The Evritis' House» [*my note*: while 'Evrites' is in plural, 'Evritis' is in singular]. So, I wake up in the morning, and after I drank my coffee, I discussed with my wife about the business of the day [...] at the latest eleven o'clock I come to association. Every morning! And till one and a half or two PM [...] Everyone know that the president is at the association's headquarters and might stop to drink a coffee, to say 'good morning!' to each other, etc. The same is in the afternoon. For example, when we have a course at seven PM, I am here from six. When is at eight, I am here from six and a half. I come here, open, take out this little table so that everyone to see, as at taverns, that we have opened, we are waiting for you! [...] All the time, here, I am busy all the day, I am trying, thinking where I shall find sponsors, with what resources we will buy clothes, etc. and this gives positive results" (Thanásis Karathanásis, president in Sérres).

¹³ These most probably are ethnically Turks. Their political recognition is as Muslims, and not as Turks. The Muslim minority is the only one in Greece with a political recognition.

The aspects of cohabitation in relation between Evrites' associations and other associations

The presentation of this type of cohabitation will be structured on three tiers: of the relationship with (1) other Evritic associations, (2) other Thracian associations, and (3) other associations generally.

As regards the relationship between the five *sýllogoi* of Evrites, it is interesting to be noted that they were founded independently of each other, confirming once again an already presence of an Evritic identity category in the respective cities. Nevertheless, the relationship is in unison characterized by the presidents as being fraternal:

“We are brother-associations, our foundation dates are different but we meet each other for years, we reunite every year in an other city. This reunion brings us closer. Our relationship is one of the best ones and, apart from the fact of rejoining, we may collaborate in an other way too: to change traditional clothes, to borrow clothes from one association to the other, or to supplement the clothes when an association has a performance; the same thing is valid for dances, we can add one or two persons to complete a group. Apart from adults reunion we make the reunion of children too. I mean the small children, we are gathering in Xánthi, and our children take part in a dance festival too” (Stéfanos Miltsakákis, Kavála).

The observation at one of the reunions [αντάμωμα], that on the 24th July 2023 in Kavála, celebrating forty years since the setting up of Evrites' Association from Kavála Prefecture “Évros”, was a part of the fieldwork for the present study. The assemblies belonging to the five Evritic associations concomitantly danced the same dances on the seafront from the centre of Kavála. Moreover, there are discussions about the establishment of a unique representation organism for all associations: “We have created a common term, «The Evrites of Eastern Macedonia – Thrace», and we have the goal to make it the representative of our union, that is to have a unique representation” (Kikí Sarighiánni, the secretary of the association from Xánthi).

A special category is that of relationship with other Thracian associations. Namely, associations which reunite the same *fýles* as the Evritic ones, founded all over in Greek Thrace, in Greece generally, and even in the wider world. By Ghiórgchos Mazarákis, the president of Evrites from Dhráma, the Evrites' associations have a special place among Thracian associations because the Évros is quite the “heart of Thrace”, and the keeper to the greatest extent of authentic Thracian traditions. The term “brother-associations” is used by Stéfanos Miltsakákis also for the Thracian Hearth [Θρακική Εστία] associations, ones of the oldest Thracian associations. The highest level organism gathering the Thracian associations is the Pan-Hellenic Federation of Thracian Organizations [Πανελλήνια Ομοσπονδία Θρακικών Σωματείων]. In the interview with the president of association from Xánthi participated also the secretary of this association, Kikí

Sarighiánni. She described the membership and the activity in the frame of federation of Thracian organizations as a calling card of the association:

“We are the bearers of cultural heritage promotion, we are members of Federation of Thracian Organizations, and we organized the tenth Thracian reunion [in 2018]. We gathered ourselves two thousands dancers here in Xánthi [...] The reunion of Thracian associations is made every year, in a different city of Greece [...] Usually, the event is organized in the northern part of Greece, to make travel easier, etc. Eighty associations came here. We had two thousand and a half dancers.”

The third level is that of relationship with other associations generally. There are included here associations of Pontic and Minor-Asian refugees; of Pomaks, Sarakatsans, etc., but also other Thracian associations, grouped this time in Pan-Hellenic Federation of Eastern Rumelia [Πανελλήνια Ομοσπονδία Σωματείων Ανατολικής Ρωμυλίας], whose members have their ascendancy in northern Thrace. A lot of facts are eloquent for the nature of this relationship; the mutual aid is one of them. For example, the beginning of activities at Evritic association from Sérres, in the absence of its own premises, took place in the hall of an Cretan association for a modest fee; vice versa, in Komotini “when the municipalities’ halls which are made available to some associations are arranged for elections, we are asked by the migrants from Epirus’ association to help them and we make them available the hall from the upper floor” (Hrístos Hatzipému) – the Evrites’ Association from Rhodopes Prefecture being the only one among the other Evritic associations which possess its own building. The *ad litteram* cohabitation between associations can be invoked in Kavála, where in the Building of Cultural Associations “Pythagoras” [Κτίριο Πολιτιστικών Συλλόγων «Πυθαγόρας»] belonging to Kavála Municipality [Δήμος Καβάλας] are hosted sixteen associations. I witnessed a friendly dialogue on one of the building corridors between Stéfanos Miltsakákis and the secretary of Peloponnesians’ associations and the president of Cretans’ associations. They all were dissatisfied regarding the television which had presented erroneously the identity of *sýllogi* that had participated at the parade on 28th October 2023 – one of the two Greece’s national days – organized on the seafront from the centre of Kavála.

There is, of course, competition between associations, in many forms. One of them is related to the access to state resources, which are usually made available by the local administrative level – municipal and regional. There is the opinion that the principle of a just allocation must take into account the needs of the associations. An association on the verge of extinction should not be equally treated as a big one having an intense activity and properly facing some collective needs. Furthermore, the *personal* ties of the members from the leadership of the associations with the administrative state apparatus play an important role for this access. By and large, however, the competition does not interfere negatively in the relationship between associations and it is stimulant for each of them. Numerous facts may be considered as many as signs for overcoming the tension generated by competition or other sources of divergence. These are metonymies both of good

inter-associations relations and of “non-formal” reflection of intra-ethnic (but sending to the inter-ethnic one too) peaceful cohabitation in Hellenic society: the balanced coexistence in the same building of several associations in Kávala; the parties for youth organized at “The Evritis’ House”, where participate youngs from other associations too, in Sérres; the setting up of Evrites’ association as a stimulus and model for the setting up of other associations in Komotiní; the participation of all periurban and urban associations at the Feast of Old City, organized every year at the beginning of September, the associations having the possibility to deploy some commercial activities, in Xánthi; spontaneous entering in the circle of dance¹⁴ of some persons belonging to different *fylés* any time a certain association organizes a public manifestation, etc.

COMPARATIVE GLIMPSE OVER THE SITUATIONS IN ROMANIA AND TURKEY

The lines that follow are not a result of some deep researches. That is why their scientific value is for the moment assumed hypothetical. Additionally, in the vein of the previous paragraph, I shall not insist on the identification and analysis of some causes, but on the description of a phenomenon. Thus, I hope to glimpse some directions of research on the topic of this paper in the perspective of a comparative regional (“Balkan” and “Anatolian”) anthropology.

In Romania, what I called intra-ethnic non-formal cohabitation is at the opposite pole compared to Greece. It is hard to find “cultural” associations that serve to such a goal, even less to raise the question of their co-existence. For example, in Prahova County – which can be considered as representative for the situation in all country – the number of these associations does not equate their number in a single medium city from Greece. More active in Romania is the *formal* organization of intra-ethnic cohabitation (and of inter-ethnic too). This happens by a network of statal institutions that includes the cultural centers [*centre culturale*] from the county capitals, the cultural houses [*case de cultură*] from cities and towns, the cultural community centers [*cămine culturale*] from villages, etc. The network is for the most part inherited from the communist period. The functioning of these institutions is often characterized by inefficiency.

One of the Prahovean cultural associations which carry out activities (the popular dance courses being the main activity) focused on tradition and has a general-community addressability that – *volens, nolens* – send to intra-ethnic identity preservation, is the Associations of Youth from Valea Doftanei [Asociația Tinerilor din Valea Doftanei]. It is to be remarked here a “partnership” with local state authority, which might be a model to follow in the situations in which a cultural institutions subordinated to an authority is not active anymore or functions utterly inefficient. Namely, the authority makes available the necessary logistic and

¹⁴ “Our dances are all circular, holding hands or waists, are not individual dances, to dance for yourself” (Ghiórgchos Mazarákis, the president of Evrites from Dhráma).

some financial resources to the association, and the last one provides with maximum efficiency the cultural service. For the local authority it is as an “externalization” of this service.

The nature of relationship in this case is not one to be unanticipated. In Romania generally is to be noticed a dependency of the NGO sector by the state, mainly from the need of financial support. In the case of the associations I am talking about, the dependence is also symbolic. The state cultural-educational employees and institutions are instinctively looked for guidance, recognition and bestowal of the value of associations’ activity. Not infrequently, the associations are set up quite by these employees (or former employees). Be that as it may, the relation with the state is as an unconditioned reflex; paradigmatically in this sense is, for example, the case of Association of Cultural Institutions [Asociația Așezămintelor Culturale], sometimes following “from Romania” in the title. In an *ad litteram* reading, it is about a nongovernmental organization grouping governmental organizations!

The situation of Turkey could be placed in the middle of a segment whose extremities are Greece, and respectively Romania. The non-formal organization of intra-ethnic cohabitation (which is possible to overlap to the inter-ethnic one from reasons that will be exposed a little bit latter) is feebler than in Greece, but stronger than in Romania. For example, eighteen associations of Cretan-Turks – namely of Muslims migrated/ transferred from the island of Crete before or after Lausanne Treaties from 1923 – are to be found on the eastern coast of Aegean Sea, and grouped in Cretan Federation of Turkey (Tagle, 2023). In addition, in the city and county Zonguldak in the northern Turkey – a county with a population (cca. 600,000 people) with a quarter less than the population of Romanian Prahova county – there are ten associations of “culture and popular dance”, by an information from Behzat Baltaş, the choreographer of Society of Popular Dances and Sport Club for Youth Anatolia [Çağdaş Anadolu Halk Oyunları Gençlik ve Spor Kulübü Derneği] from Zonguldak. Moreover, by the same source, “in some counties, aside of such nongovernmental organizations, there are groups which functions within municipalities and cultural (state) directorates”.

Finally, in the case of Turkey too is to be mentioned, even by approximation, the form which the relationship between the associations and state takes. In Greece, the relation is distant, where the “cultural” associations – and not only these – maintain an instrumental relation with state, being considered a possible source of resources and the two parts are made available to one another only from pragmatic reasons. In Romania, a cultivation of an active relation by the *associations* with state is to be noticed. In Turkey, it is to be expected that *state* to be more concerned about the existence and relation with the associations type taken into account along this study. The background is ideological; since the foundation of republican Turkey, a steady assimilation (“the polar opposite of multiculturalism” [Emerson, 2011: 2]) of an essentialist type was followed. That is, beyond the differences between the populations that spread over the vast Turkish territory it is believed as naturally existing a common “turkishness”, the state considering it is its duty to supervise the preservation and education in the spirit of this turkishness.

Thanks to the presidents of the five Evritic Greek associations that kindly answered to my request. Among them, I especially thank to Stéfanos Miltakákis, the president of Evrites' Association from Kavála Prefecture "Évros", of whose collaboration I benefit for more than a decade. My gratitude move also towards to the other persons mentioned along the study. I also own thanks to Georgeta Richea, the president of Associations of Youth from Valea Doftanei, and to Gheorghiță Geană, for his suggestions at the initial variant of the study. Not in the least, it is to be mentioned my wife, Anișoara Ștefănuță, whose personal ties in Valea Doftanei and Turkey were very useful in the writing of the comparative paragraph from the end of the present paper.

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Cristian Mușă, *Aspects of peasant culture in Starchiojd. Oral and written testimonies*. Ethnologica Publishing House, Bucharest, 2020, 298 p., ISBN 978-606-8830-92-6.

Anda-Marinela Oneață*

Cristian Mușă (PhD) is a recognized researcher in ethnochoreology, working at the Constantin Brăiloiu Institute of Ethnography and Folklore of the Romanian Academy.

This paper presents the ethnological portrait of his native commune, Starchiojd, in Prahova County, based on the research of his doctoral thesis at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Bucharest, which the author defended in 2018, under the guidance of his coordinating professor, Dr. Nicolae Constantinescu.

The author, a son of the village, had the privilege of knowing deeply this rural settlement, as the subject of the book focuses on its observation as outlined in oral and written testimonies, also analyzing the institutions and people of the local community.

The book consists of a "Preface" written by Ioana-Ruxandra Fruntelată, then the "Foreword" by the author, the eight chapters and 15 subchapters, and the annexes including interviews, photographs, and interlocutor presentations.

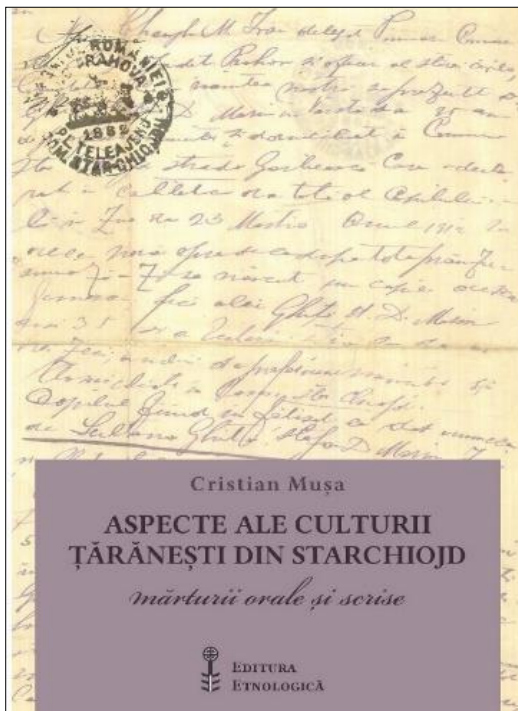
The first pages point to two important aspects: the recognition of the financial support from the "ROTAREA" Association and the "Motivus" Association, thanks to which the book was printed, and the author's mention of the dedication of the book to his father Ion Mușă, "too early to leave us".

In the first chapter, "Orality and scriptuality - some theoretical issues" (p. 19– p. 56), the author notes theories regarding folkloric orality and the influence of writing on the community under study. In the form of a scientific approach, he analyzes oral and written documents found in the village, inventorying the multitude of documentary forms he takes into account.

The author presents a history of methods of communication, preservation and transmission of culture and remarks particularities of orality and scriptuality. Thus orality is referred to instability, naturalness, spontaneity, syncretism, expressiveness, while writing is seen as a support for memory and reliability.

Tracing the transition from orality to the writing, Dr. Cristian Mușă observes the interference between the two means: "Thus, we can see that orality has coexisted with writing since the emergence of the latter and that there was interference between the folk/oral and scholarly milieus, each representing a source of inspiration for the other." (p. 19–20)

As theoretical support, he mentions Paul Zumthor's work, « Le lettre et la voix. De la littérature médiévale », in which four types of orality are established as follows: (1) primary (in primitive societies, without any graphic sign), (2) mixed (orality coexists with writing), (3) secondary (orality recomposed, starting from writing), (4) mediatized (from the 20th century, as fixed by audio-visual technology) (p. 19).



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The author also reviews the history of writing, the emergence of epics from the eastern part of the Mediterranean, the Epic of Gilgamesh written by the Sumerians, the emergence of printing that led to the printing of folk books from the lower classes, the culture of manuscripts ("History of Tobacco", one of the first books published in Transylvania, which depicts tobacco as "the creation of devil"). Ioniță Giurescu (a Middel-Age dignitary of Wallachian council) is mentioned, as having copied a series of writings, as well as the deacon Coresi, who translated church books from Slavonic ("Voronețean Psalter", "Voronețean Codices"). Further sources cited in the context are the two volumes of Nicolae Cartojan ("Folk Books in Romanian Literature"), including information about folk literature, histories, short stories, and hagiographic legends.

The main idea that the author reaches is that although writing developed gradually, the community did not distance itself from orality, but the two coexisted constantly. Moreover, he notes the various functions that writing accomplished over time: it was a means of communication between people, it was healing, it activated spells, it defended the community from external forces that brought harm, it updated magical practices, it helped to forgive sins, to defend pregnant women, to protect soldiers.

In the second chapter, "Written Documents in Relation to Orality" (pp. 56–74), the author takes notice that, with the adoption of the practice of writing by the peasants, interest in the folklore repertoire also appears. In the 20th century, he talks about the appearance of notebooks recording special events from the lives of the people of Starchiojd, as preserved in writing for the collective memory.

According to Otilia Hedeșan, today's culture is called "mixed" (p. 58) because the two modes of transmission, orality and scriptuality, remain in continuous collaboration, the texts being characterized by a language of orality.

The author mentions the study of the first such peasant notebooks by the Romanian ethno-folklorist Constantin Brăiloiu, ten in number, the oldest dating from 1877. Also, the data recorded by Otilia Hedeșan in the work "When peasants start writing. About notebooks to record traditions in the « Culture of memory in Central Europe »" attest to the appearance of the first such notebooks in the 19th century in Transylvania and Banat. In reinforcing the mention, the study by Mihai Pop and Pavel Ruxăndoiu, "Romanian Literary Folklore", demonstrates the appearance of writing among peasants, recalling the episode in which Mihail Kogălniceanu asks for a song from his gardener's notebook.

Following the model of the aforementioned researchers, the author analyzes "notebooks, notebooks or other media on which peasants noted certain aspects related to personal or community life", with the aim of making a classification of "interlocutors-as-writers" (p. 58).

For this purpose, the author classifies folk creators into: "peasant authors and peasants who are represented by authors, that is, those who tell stories and benefit from someone who writes their story" (p. 60). The fundamental themes addressed are the story of life, war, wedding songs, funeral songs, laments, medicinal remedies, cake recipes.

The third chapter, "Scientific works on the researched area" (pp. 75–88), is developed in the form of a corpus of texts, in which the author mentions studies that dealt with the origins and history of the Starchiojd locality, documented since 1418.

The work of the Giurescu family of historians, "As still regards the antiquity of the villages Starchiojd and Chiojdul Mic", signed by Constantin C. Giurescu, in 1971, is concisely summarized by the author: "Their work was mainly aimed at establishing the origins of the locals, identifying the eponymous hero and his roots." (p. 76)

Also, the historian Nicolae Iorga in "Notes on another « Câmpulung » - in Wallachia: Chiojdele" (1927) mentions aspects such as the natural settlement, occupations, work, church service, hora, and graphic signs of the place.

In addition to the interest of specialists, there is also the initiative of some sons of the village to reflect the community in which they made a living thanks to writing. The author reminds us of the teacher Constantin Popescu, "who presents to readers the life of a mountain village with its good and bad" (p. 78), in the work "Comedies of Peasant Manners", Constantin M. Răpeanu, theologian, philologist and journalist, who wrote the volumes "Documents on the history of the Starchiojd commune" in collaboration with Nicolae Simache, a corpus of 121 documents in which the commune appears, research on charters and oral culture, Stelian I. Florescu-Pânte, who made a monographic sketch with them in 1992, Gheorghe O. Zăhărescu, prosecutor, who published in 1973 in the journal *Magazin istoric* the tensions created between the inhabitants concerning properties and

inheritances, Neculai Pascu, who, while preparing his doctoral thesis, published the article “Scoarțele Chiojdului” in 1971, in which he analyzed the local weaving techniques.

Previous research in the village of Starchiojd was carried out in 2013–2014, when Cristian Mușă, together with students and graduates from the graduate program “Cultural Studies. Ethnology” and with experienced researchers from the University of Bucharest and the Constantin Brăiloiu Institute of Ethnography and Folklore, published, together with Ioana-Ruxandra Fruntelată, two volumes: *Starchiojd. Cultural Heritage* (Part One). *Housing, Occupations, Crafts* (2014), and *Starchiojd. Cultural Heritage* (Part Two). *Holidays, Customs, Folklore Repertoire, Representative Local Traditions* (2015).

The fourth chapter, “Oral and written documents from the researched area. Principles of interpretation” (pp. 89–111), does not first open the discussion about documents transmitted orally or in writing, as the title mentions, but rather, it deals with the emergence of spaces intended for official education, more specifically the Starchiojd school.

There is no clear evidence of the existence of these spaces, but the author draws attention to several statements that he introduces in his study. Stelian I. Florescu-Pântece's 1969 work, “Notes on the School in Starchioj”, attests to the existence of two teachers in the 17th century, Moise and Ioan. Nicolae Iorga also reinforces the statement by saying that there was a school around 1691, under the guidance of a teacher named Ioan. Moreover, during the time of Alexandru Ghica, in 1839, it is known that 152 families were studying in the town hall.

In this chapter, the author introduces his readers to a history of education in Starchiojd. In 1859, the villagers built a school in a private house, with the priest Ioan Rușavețeanu as their teacher. The school functioned as follows: the elders taught the younger ones, the Cyrillic alphabet was learned, writing was done on stone, by scraping with another stone, then with a goose feather pen and ink. The schedule included, in addition to arithmetic, history, religion and agriculture, hygiene, gardening. In 1924, schools were built with the support of the people and institutions, reaching the peak in 1994 that the village had 4 schools with 805 students. In 2018, with the tendency of people to move from the periphery to the center, the 4 schools are concentrated in one.

As for printed documents, the author notes that in the village of Starchiojd, writing was a secondary component, the peasants' inclination towards books was in the form of a defense against the abuses through which the boyars took their lands. The first documents that appeared in the form of manuscripts deal with the issue of inheritances, they were property documents, sale and purchase deeds, church memorials, engravings on crosses, on icons, on fountains, dowry sheets from the 19th century, handwritten receipts, debts, loans, leases, pieces from the folklore repertoire, personal experiences, carols, cake recipes, incantations.

In the fifth chapter, “Folklore Life in Starchiojd. Oral Transmission and Recording of Inherited Traditions” (p. 112–150), the author identifies the forms of oral communication encountered in the village, maintaining a chronological order of their appearance.

The most archaic forms are: shouting over the hill, in which the sender thickens or thins his voice and creates a transmission channel, placing his hands over his mouth like a funnel, as well as sending one's mouth word, as a code accepted and used by the community in communication.

Moreover, in an artistic form, folk dances, characterized by liveliness, dynamism, good cheer, shouts, were a way of communication most often between married girls and young men, sometimes a direction of steps, sometimes forms of irony and gossip about unmarried, lazy or ugly women. Among these we mention: *hora mare, sârba, sârba dogarului, brâul, alunelul, fedeleşul*, couple dances: *geampara, brașoveanca, ciobănașul*.

Poetic creations were also a way of communication, depicting the reality in which people lived, the image of orphaned children, widowed women, returned soldiers. Most often they are versified narratives, poems learned at school for the end of the year, creations to commemorate historical events and heroes, satirical poems, ballads about outlaws and boyars.

Similarly, the forms of communication are represented by stories about life, which include the stages of life (childhood, youth, old age), legends about the creation of the village, which center on a family with three children, through the separation of which Chiojdul Mic, Chiojdul Mare and Valea Anei were created, proverbs, sayings, jokes, funeral texts, carols...

In the sixth chapter, “Interpretation of information with reference to the bearers of tradition” (p. 150–235), the author organizes in the form of a classification the types of interlocutors he studied during his scientific approach and interprets the written texts and oral testimonies, thus observing, in addition to the typologies of informants, the long-gone peasant vision of the world.

The interlocutors are divided into three categories: those who use only oral methods, considered the most conservative, those who expressed themselves mostly only through writing, and those who adopted the written method in addition to orality.

Representative of the first category, of strictly oral expression, are the two folk creators Elisabeta Lucica Tănăsescu from Starchiojd and Maria (Mia) Bejgu from Rotarea, bearers of a heritage of great value due to their experienced memory and storytelling ability, having no written support to rely on.

Mia Bejgu, 76 years old, “is an octogenarian who knows how to bring old stories to life and introduce the listener to a faded, but once real world” (p. 156). She provides information about the founding of the village and the school, about the church, about the church hermitage, about the occupations of the locals, about wheeling, assembling and making carts, reproduces the road to school under Russian rule, staying with an uncle's sheep, together with her younger brothers, while fulfilling household tasks.

Aunt Lucica, Elisabeta Tănăsescu, “is the type of interlocutor who transmits only orally, does not use any written support to narrate or interpret certain creations” (p. 173), addresses themes such as fairy tales, fables, poems, songs, performances at the village Cultural Center, where she performed with love on stage, weddings, funerals, plowing.

With the presentation of the notebooks of “Mother” Lica Diaconu, “known as the first person to establish herself locally as a mediator between spoken and written popular culture” (p. 175), we move on to another type of interlocutor, scriptural. Born in 1913, she leads a difficult life, losing her father and three brothers in World War I, and her husband in World War II, remaining a widow with three children. Her five notebooks include four parts: the story of life in verse and prose, the ethnographic description in the family and calendar framework, aspects related to the local folklore repertoire and various events in the village. In addition, we also encounter carols, religious texts, courtship, wedding, fortune-telling practices, the *sézătorea* reunions, dowry sheets, calamities, and parables.

The front-line diary of Ion Cîrmici, a bearer of folklore and a veteran of the Second World War, represents the third category of informants, adopting a personal technique of transmitting the story of the war experience, interweaving the oral with the scriptural. The author illustrates how the story unfolded, first the subject read from the diary, then he orally and in detail developed each episode.

In his “Conclusions” (p. 236–241), the author resumes the types of interlocutors he managed to identify and talks about his initiative to research the village tradition since 2008, noting local stories and traditions, which could be fruitful in subsequent books.

The researcher reveals his entire research process, conducts theoretical and archive studies, collects information from the field, texts them in the form of ethnological documents, contextualizes and analyzes them, trying to classify them according to certain typologies, builds a corpus of texts in accordance with theoretical concepts, uses direct and indirect methods as working techniques, interviews, life stories, direct and participatory observation, experiments, appendices: photographs, memoirs, front-line diaries, documents, films from funerals and weddings.

Cristian Mușă also reveals the difficulties he encountered throughout the research, including: people's distrust, their rejection, hiding from strangers, even the locals' fear of being robbed. In this situation, the insider position represented an advantage in overcoming these difficulties, as people trusted a son of the village. Looking from another perspective, however, the familiarity between the ethnologist and the local inevitably betrays traces of affectivity and emotion in the former. The book ends with elements necessary for such a scientific work, rigorously compiled according to academic requirements: “List of persons who provided information” (p. 242), Bibliography” (p. 243) and “Appendices: interviews, photographs, interlocutor files” (p. 248).

Silvia Ciubotaru, Ion H. Ciubotaru,
Tissus décoratifs et broderies de Moldavie, Iași:
Maison d'Édition de l'Université « Alexandru
Ioan Cuza », 2024, 328 p.,
ISBN 978-606-714-836-7.

Petria Neagu*

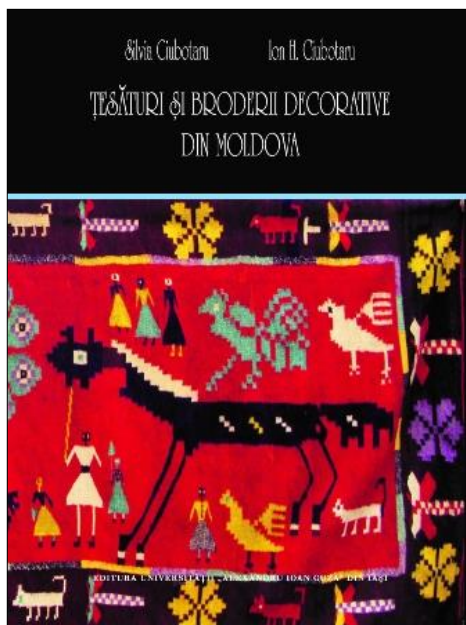
Les professeurs Silvia et Ion H. Ciubotaru travaillent à la branche de Iași de l'Académie roumaine, particulièrement sur le projet d'archives folkloriques de Moldavie et de Bucovine. L'activité prodigieuse du professeur Ion H. Ciubotaru a été couronnée par son élection en tant que membre honoraire de l'Académie Roumaine (2022).

En 2024, Silvia et Ion H. Ciubotaru ont publié, à la Maison d'Édition universitaire « Alexandru Ioan Cuza » de Iași, le livre *Tissus décoratifs et broderies de Moldavie*, dans lequel ils réussirent à mettre en valeur les fonds documentaires de ces archives folkloriques régionales. À travers l'ouvrage susmentionné, une large perspective sur les tissus moldaves est offerte, alors que les symboles archaïques, les motifs, les couleurs utilisés et les compositions font révéler un cadre des traditions des régions étudiées.

Un tel ouvrage est essentiel dans le contexte ethnologique actuel car il met en évidence l'importance des implications magiques et rituelles-cérémoniales transmises à travers les tissus traditionnels de la région moldave. En même temps, les motifs représentatifs de l'art populaire, ainsi que leur signification sont également présentés.

Le livre se compose d'une *Introduction*, puis huit chapitres (*Excursion historique; Rétrospective bibliographique; Mouchoirs, serviettes, écorces. Valences magiques et rituelles-cérémoniales ; Ornaments; Composition et les couleurs; Images énigmatiques. Interprétations ; Décorations intérieures paysannes. Fonctionnalité et esthétique. Conclusions*). D'autres sections constitutives sont le *Corpus de documents* (divisé en cinq catégories distinctes), un *Index analytique des localités étudiées*, un *Index des noms des propriétaires des pièces incluses dans le volume*, un *Index des thèmes et motifs*, et enfin la *Bibliographie* et un *Résumé*.

Les premières pages de l'ouvrage commencent par la mention d'un volume écrit par les auteurs il y a quatre décennies, à savoir « Ornaments populaires traditionnels de la région de Botoșani. Couture, tissage ». L'intérêt des auteurs pour le domaine de l'art populaire est également présenté, amplifié par leur connaissance du patrimoine des tissus locaux, sur lequel la littérature spécialisée de l'époque était plutôt restreinte. Ainsi, les auteurs ont estimé qu'« il était injuste qu'un espace ethnoculturel aussi vaste et généreux en termes de production de valeurs humaines reste presque inconnu en termes de ses manifestations ethnographiques et artistiques populaires » (p. 5). Différent de tous les autres ouvrages de ce genre, le volume est individualisé à travers des documents inédits, découverts dans la partie nord-est du pays, entre 1980–1982. En revanche, le présent volume est beaucoup plus complexe et présente une version complète de l'ensemble de la Moldavie historique. Les auteurs analysent en profondeur les motifs décoratifs rencontrés, les implications rituelles et cérémonielles des objets, en se concentrant également sur les significations des symboles anciens.



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Le premier chapitre du livre, intitulé *Excursus historique*, présente l'évolution au fil du temps des motifs et symboles retrouvés sur les mouchoirs, les écorces et les serviettes. Ainsi, à l'Épipaléolithique, plusieurs systèmes géométriques apparaissent, et plus tard, au Néolithique, on rencontre des techniques décoratives, et les relations entre fond et décor sont plus diversifiées. À l'âge du fer, des motifs zoomorphes et phytomorphes apparaissent. Au Moyen Âge, les mouchoirs et les serviettes avaient des fonctions magico-rituelles-cérémoniales. En Moldavie, aux XVIe-XIXe siècles, on remarque l'importance des serviettes, des écorces et des foulards, car ils étaient inclus dans la dot des filles sur le point de se marier. En 1890, les localités d'Avamești, Mărăști et Nănești furent reconnues pour leur industrie textile. Enfin, la beauté des textiles traditionnels conquiert également Paris, lors des expositions de 1867–1900.

Dans le chapitre suivant, *Rétrospective bibliographique*, les auteurs ont présenté par ordre chronologique les publications les plus pertinentes dans le domaine des tissus et de l'art populaire, en se référant également aux recherches sur le terrain des auteurs, mais aussi à l'interprétation des motifs et symboles présents sur les tissus. Ainsi, nous constatons que de nombreux chercheurs se sont intéressés au domaine de l'art populaire, souhaitant le mettre en valeur. Sont mentionnées ici des œuvres telles que Tudor Pamfile, *L'Industrie domestique roumaine* et *La chromatique du peuple roumain*, Georgeta Stoica et Aurelia Doagă, *Intérieurs roumains. Tissus décoratifs et coutures*, Marcela Focșa, écorces roumaines, Gh. Nistoroia, Folk Erasure, Silvia N. Șărănuță, *Ornements folkloriques moldaves*, etc.

Chapitre trois, *Mouchoirs, serviettes, écorces. Valences magiques et rituelles-cérémoniales* présente l'importance magico-rituelle de ces tissus dans les séquences de mariage et de funérailles, et nous découvrons ainsi également l'utilité de ces objets spéciaux, pas seulement leur beauté. De là, nous apprenons qu'en Moldavie, un mouchoir déchiré en deux symbolise la séparation et le malheur. Dans le même temps, les mouchoirs sont également utilisés dans les actes de guérison de la médecine populaire et dans les chants. Le mouchoir est également utilisé dans la magie noire, les sorts d'amour et pour soulager les maux. La serviette était utilisée pour purifier les endroits impurs, où des sorts étaient exécutés, et après un décès, le miroir était recouvert d'une serviette immaculée. De plus, les serviettes, les tissus et les mouchoirs sont de véritables ponts entre différentes séquences significatives de la vie humaine, présents dans les cérémonies de mariage et de funérailles.

Le chapitre intitulé *Ornements* fournit des informations sur les éléments géométrisés, physiomorphes, phytomorphes, zoomorphes et skeomorphes présents sur les tissus moldaves. On apprend que l'origine des motifs est ancienne, il y a des éléments daces et latins, des motifs byzantins et arabes, donc on a un creuset, un style original. Sur l'écorce moldave, on retrouve des ornements géométriques tels que : *zigzag*, *dents de scie*, *losange*, *étoile*, *tête de cheval*. Les formes phytomorphes reflètent la variété de la flore locale : branches à feuilles et fruits de pommier, cerisier, sapin, chêne, vigne, on rencontre aussi des boutons de rose, des œillets, des lys, des tulipes. Dans la sphère des motifs zoomorphes, on rencontre souvent des animaux domestiques : chiens, chèvres, chevaux, ânes. Cependant, la composition phytomorphique la plus représentative de la région de Moldavie est l'arbre de vie, et dans ce volume nous avons plus de 70 représentations. Un motif extrêmement intéressant trouvé dans la région de Pașcanilor est la *mocanca*, une fille avec un chapeau rond et une plume. Dans ce chapitre, les auteurs présentent la symbolique de chaque motif utilisé sur les tissus et l'importance de leur utilisation.

Dans les pages du chapitre cinq, *Composition et les couleurs*, il est montré que dans le cas des tissus moldaves, l'organisation compositionnelle respecte les deux modes propres à l'art populaire : le mode statique, par symétrie et suivant le modèle ancien, mais aussi le mode dynamique, avec une touche de décentralisation. Ici, on peut remarquer la préférence pour la biochromie rouge-noir ou rouge-bleu, qui indique le raffinement, étant utilisée pour décorer les serviettes, les nappes et les mouchoirs. Le fond de l'écorce moldave est sombre, généralement marron, noir, olive, et la palette de couleurs est très diversifiée.

Dans le chapitre *Images énigmatiques. Interprétations*, on nous raconte des rencontres avec divers informateurs, à travers lesquelles on découvre des tissus impressionnants, puis, leur photographie, ainsi que la documentation, en consultant la littérature spécialisée pour connaître plus de détails. La Vieille Rarița de Pleșani de Petrace Strungaru met en lumière une écorce très ancienne, cassée et endommagée par le passage du temps, mais qui est un véritable trésor. Paraschiva

de Sânduleanu, à son tour, présente une écorce très ancienne, et l'Ileana de Vasile Ciobanu, âgée de 95 ans, a ramené à l'attention du public des toiles où est représentée la «végétalisation» de l'image humaine.

Le septième chapitre est consacré aux décorations des intérieurs paysans et se concentre sur certaines pièces des maisons traditionnelles, où l'on rencontre des éléments représentatifs de l'art populaire de la région moldave. La maison parentale est un repère important dans l'organisation magique de la communauté villageoise. Les couleurs et l'ornementation enrichissent l'image de la maison, elles donnent vie aux intérieurs neutres. Les auteurs nous présentent également le motif de la maison fleurie, faisant référence au jardin du Ciel.

Le dernier chapitre expose les conclusions des auteurs concernant la structure de l'œuvre, ainsi que l'étude de l'importance des implications magiques et rituelles-cérémoniales des pièces examinées. Nous observons également la base documentaire, composée de : films en noir et blanc et en couleur, photographies, registres des personnes qui possèdent ces objets et données sur les villages respectifs.

Dans la deuxième section, consacrée au corpus des documents, on retrouve cinq catégories distinctes, à savoir : *Mouchoirs, foulards [...]; Serviettes [...]; Rideaux [...]; nappes, taies d'oreiller; Dentelles, tentures [...]; écorces, tapis [...], intérieurs paysans.*

Dans cette section, on observe des diverses photos représentatives des sous-catégories mentionnées. Avec leur aide, on dispose également d'une base visuelle essentielle pour mieux comprendre les notations des auteurs, présentes dans les chapitres précédents. Ces images réussissent à transmettre la véritable beauté des tissus, ainsi que les motifs et leurs couleurs distinctifs.

Ainsi, le livre signé par Silvia Ciubotaru et Ion Ciubotaru, parti de recherches beaucoup plus anciennes, se prouve aujourd'hui d'être beaucoup plus complexe. A mon avis, il mériterait une traduction dans une langue étrangère pour faciliter la diffusion de ces informations et images uniques. Je crois que cet ouvrage est important et doit être mieux connu, au moins parmi les experts et les passionnés d'études culturelles, de folklore et d'art populaire.

ROMANIAN YOUTH DESERVE MORE THAN AN OPTION – MAKE COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION MANDATORY

SUZANA TURCU¹

Dear Editor,

This letter seeks to examine the current state of sexual and reproductive health among Romanian adolescents, alongside concerns related to bullying and name-calling in school environments. It advocates for the mandatory and sustained integration of Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) and inclusive health education into the national curriculum, aiming to promote informed, respectful and safe behaviors among youth.

BACKGROUND

In Romania, CSE is not offered as a mandatory, standalone subject in the national curriculum. Instead, it is partially included in the optional “Health Education” program available for students in grades I through XII (UNICEF Romania, 2024). Participation in this course requires written parental consent, which limits its implementation and reach. Although Parliament passed legislation in 2020 mandating the introduction of “life education, including sexual education” in the curriculum, the law was later amended due to pressure from conservative and religious groups, replacing “sexual education” with “health education” and further enforcing the requirement for parental approval (Balkan Insight, 2020). Despite these constraints, public support for CSE is growing. A 2022 national survey conducted by the Society for Contraceptive and Sexual Education (SECS) found that 77% of Romanians believe sexual education should be taught in schools, particularly for its role in preventing teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STI) (Romania Insider, n.d.). Furthermore, initiatives such as the 2024 UNICEF–Ministry of Education project on safe and supportive schools emphasize social and emotional learning and mental health, contributing indirectly to a more holistic educational framework (UNICEF Romania, 2024). Nevertheless, the lack of a consistent, scientifically grounded and compulsory national strategy continues to hinder equitable access to sexual and reproductive health education.

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During the recent Romanian presidential elections campaign, the topic of sexual education became a battleground for misinformation and fake news. Various claims were distributed on social media and some partisan outlets, claiming that sexual education promotes inappropriate content for children or undermine traditional family values. Some political figures and media outlets circulated distorted statistics and fear-mongering narratives, aiming to stoke public anxiety and rally conservative voters. Certain political figures propagated false narratives, claiming that European Union directives mandated the teaching of “sexology” and explicit sexual content to young children. For instance, a Romanian deputy alleged that a supposed EU directive would enforce “early education” programs in kindergartens, which he described as “masked pedophilia,” falsely asserting that children as young as six would receive lessons on masturbation and that parents opposing these classes could face severe penalties (Spotmedia, 2025). These claims were widely disseminated on social media platforms and amplified by extremist groups, fuelling public debates and misunderstandings. In fact, a misrepresentation of a French national program, was inaccurately portrayed as an EU mandate. Part of the population claimed that European Union directives mandated the teaching of “sexology” and exposing young children to explicit sexual content, alleging that this would undermine traditional family values. These narratives were propagated through social media platforms, particularly Facebook, Telegram and Tiktok.

This misinformation not only confused the public but also hindered constructive debate about a critical public health issue, diverting attention from the proven benefits of sexual education in reducing teenage pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and abuse (WHO, 2023). These narratives often aimed to inflame public fears and polarize voters, overshadowing the documented benefits of CSE in improving adolescent health and reducing early pregnancies (Doublet, 2019; European Parliament, 2023; European Parliament, 2022). Such misinformation risks hindering constructive public discourse and delaying urgent public health measures. To counter this, transparent communication from health authorities and educators is mandatory (Bernhardt, 2004; PHCC, 2024; Thomas *et al.*, 2004).

Combating these falsehoods with transparent, evidence-based communication is essential to ensure that policy decisions are made in the best interest of Romanian youth and society at large which is crucial for addressing issues like Romania’s high rates of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.

FACTS

Health education refers to a wide-ranging curriculum that includes topics such as nutrition, hygiene, physical activity, mental well-being, prevention of substance abuse and personal safety (Mitic *et al.*, 2012). CSE, on the other hand, is a focused component that deals with human development (anatomy and physiology, emotional and psychological changes), reproductive health (conception, pregnancy, birth and child care), contraception, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), gender identity (understanding and accepting diversity), consent and interpersonal relationships

(the significance of shared understanding, mutual respect, and honest communication in maintaining healthy intimate relationships), family planning, etc. (UNESCO, 2018). Both should be implemented using an age-appropriate, progressive approach, meaning that children are introduced to basic concepts in early years—such as body parts, personal boundaries and the difference between safe and unsafe touch—and are gradually taught more complex topics during adolescence, like contraception, emotional intimacy and the prevention of sexual abuse (BIÖG WHO-CC, n.d.; Mitic *et al.*, 2012). Contrary to popular myths amplified during Romanian electoral debates, with CSE, young children are not exposed to explicit content, nor is the curriculum designed to promote sexual activity.

Romanian studies revealed approximately 15% of children received information about sex between the ages of 5 and 11 (Faludi and Rada, 2019), 7,2% reported having engaged in their first sexual intercourse before the age of 15 and less than 25% used protection at first intercourse (Rada, 2014; Rada *et al.*, 2023). The lack of structured, age-appropriate sexual education throughout the years results in a series of public health issues that require immediate intervention.

HIGH INCIDENCE OF TEENAGE PREGNANCIES

Romania consistently reports one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancies in the European Union, nearly 45% of all mothers under the age of 15 across the EU coming from Romania (Turcu *et al.*, 2022; UNICEF Romania, 2022). In 2020 alone, 16,821 teenagers under the age of 19 became mothers, as reported by the National Institute of Statistics (INS). In 2023, 648 births were recorded among girls under the age of 15 and 14714 girls between 15 and 19 years old gave birth. These statistics reflect not just a health concern but also a failure of the education system to provide adolescents with essential and resources in order to make informed decisions about their sexual health.

Given that more teenagers start their sex life at 15 years old or earlier, CSE must be part of the curriculum (Faludi and Rada, 2019; Reis *et al.*, 2024). Comprehensive, age-appropriate sexual education has been proven to reduce rates of unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and sexual violence. It also empowers young people with the knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions and to seek help when needed.

LOW HPV VACCINATION RATES AND CERVICAL CANCER BURDEN

The human papillomavirus (HPV) is a leading cause of cervical cancer, which continues to have a high prevalence in Romania. A Romanian woman is diagnosed with cervical cancer every two hours; the country ranks second in Europe in terms of the mortality and incidence rate of this disease (Simion *et al.*, 2023; Todor *et al.*, 2021). Studies in Romania indicate significant knowledge gaps in sexually transmitted diseases and sexual health among adolescents, young

people and adults (Manolescu *et al.*, 2022; Rada *et al.*, 2010). Also other risk factors remain unknown for breast cancer (Petrescu *et al.*, 2024). The initial HPV vaccination campaign started in 2008 achieved a coverage of merely 2.57%, leading to its suspension in 2011 due to low interest. Subsequent efforts have continued to face challenges, with data indicating persistently low vaccination rates among the target population (INSP, 2025). In Romania, the vaccine is administered free of charge to girls and boys aged 11–18.

Many Romanian women delay or avoid regular screenings and HPV vaccinations due to lack of knowledge and financial means resulting in 47.4% of Romanian women never had a Pap smear (EU average 13.4%) (Eurostat, 2022; Simion *et al.*, 2023). The study advises incorporating sexual education into school curricula as a strategy to increase awareness and normalize preventive care from an early age.

According to the European Cancer Organisation, Romania has one of the lowest HPV vaccination rates in the EU, with only 13% of eligible girls vaccinated. The same source reports over 1,800 deaths annually due to cervical cancer in Romania—figures that could be significantly reduced with effective vaccination and awareness campaigns, both of which are often introduced through school-based education (ECO, 2024; EP, 2022).

The situation of estimated incidence and mortality due to cervical cancer, according to the European Cancer Information System (European Commission), is presented in Figure 1 showing that Romania recorded rates twice as high as the European average (EU27) (EC, 2022).

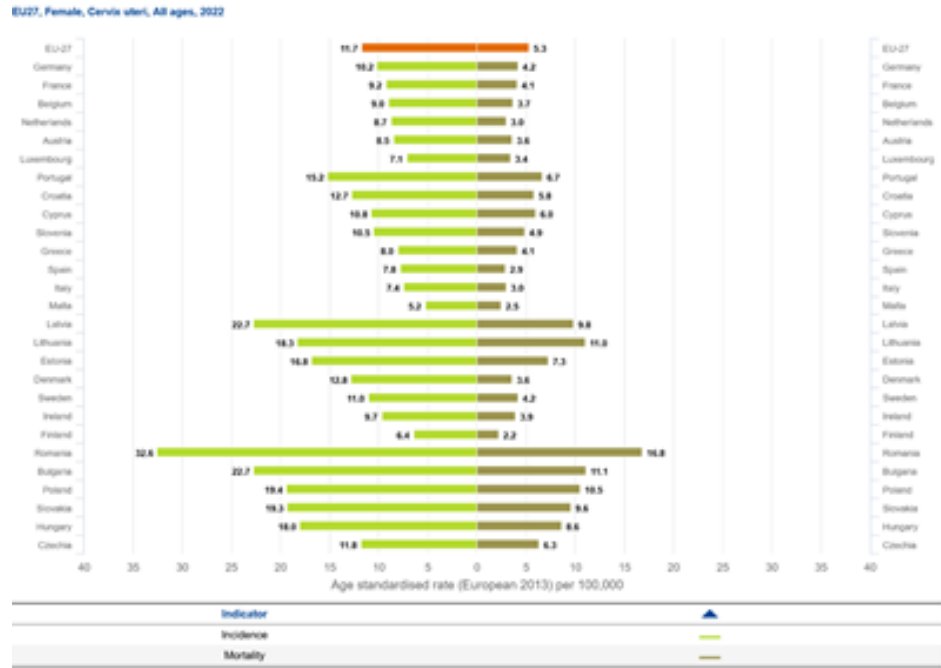


Figure 1. Estimated incidence and mortality due to cervical cancer by country (Source: European Commission)

HIGH PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL ABUSE AMONG MINORS

The lack of education regarding consent and sexual boundaries leaves minors vulnerable to abuse. In 2024 approximately 78% of rape cases were closed without legal action (Poliția Română, 2025.; Centrul FILIA, 2025). Reports from Romanian law enforcement agencies indicate that, on average, eight children are sexually abused each day and in approximately 80% of these cases, the perpetrator is a family member. Many of sexual aggression against minors, go unreported or unresolved due to systemic gaps in prevention and education (NGO Norway, n.d.).

NGO Norway published a report with data revealing that a minor becomes a victim of sexual abuse every six hours in Romania. This trend has seen a yearly increase of 20%, with a staggering 70% rise for boys and 24% for girls over the past three years (NGO Norway, n.d.).

In 2024, 3,999 crimes of rape of a minor and 934 crimes of sexual assault on minors were registered at the General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police (Poliția Română, 2025.; Centrul FILIA, 2025)

These statistics highlight not only a failure in the justice system but also a societal gap in educating youth about recognizing and reporting abuse, providing knowledge about consent and personal boundaries.

LACK OF MEDICAL SERVICES, LACK OF EDUCATION

Save the Children reports, based on data from the National Federation of Family Physician Associations, report that 53% of localities in Romania lack sufficient family doctors or have none at all. As a result, pregnant women in disadvantaged rural areas cannot access medical services for pregnancy monitoring. 80% of pregnant women or mothers under 18 did not use any contraceptive method because they did not have information about their use, 85% of mothers and pregnant women under the age of 18 no longer go to school, most of them dropping out before pregnancy and 4 out of 10 pregnant underage mothers do not access other medical services during pregnancy.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION IN SCHOOL-BASED EDUCATION

Social learning, defined as the process by which individuals acquire behaviors through the observation and imitation of significant others, is pivotal in the development of behavior. However, it also has the potential to result in the adoption of undesirable behaviors. For example, when children are exposed to aggressive reactions, lack of empathy, or negative patterns of interaction, they are more likely to imitate them and find them acceptable (Bandura, 1977). Over time, such influences can affect the development of moral norms and prosocial behavior, therefore, the responsibility of adults to provide appropriate role models is essential in the child's socialization process (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1997; Rada and Turcu, 2012).

In the last part of the electoral campaign, the term “autistic” was used as a pejorative term addressed to one of the candidates and his supporters. This labelling prompted strong stances from civil society, including NGOs, parents of children diagnosed with autism and medical associations.

According to American Psychiatric Association – DSM-5-TR (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision) Autism, or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts and restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities (APA, 2022; APA, 2000). Oxford Concise Medical Dictionary defines this disorder as a condition usually appearing in early childhood, characterized by difficulties in communication and forming relationships with other people and in using language and abstract concepts (Martin, 2015). The prevalence of autism has notably increased over the years, with studies estimating that globally about one in 100 children is diagnosed with autism. Studies indicate rates exceeding 1% in Europe and 2.64% in South Korea (Petre *et al.*, 2023).

The use of the term “*autistic*” as a pejorative expression reflects a multifaceted problematic attitude that can be critically analysed through several lenses. First of all, it constitutes *ableism*, as it reinforces negative stereotypes and social hierarchies that tend to marginalize individuals with neurodevelopmental differences. There is also the perspective of *discriminatory behavior*, where a clinical diagnosis is used in a manner that may contribute to patterns of exclusion and stigmatization. Furthermore, such language often indicates *emotional immaturity*, as it reveals an underdeveloped capacity for empathy and respectful interpersonal communication. Such behavior may also be rooted in *ignorance*, specifically a lack of understanding regarding autism spectrum conditions and the living realities of neurodivergent individuals. In specific contexts, particularly when employed repetitively or in a targeted manner, this behaviour may constitute *hate speech*, especially if it incites hostility or perpetuates a hostile environment toward a vulnerable group. As such, the casual misuse of clinical terms with the intention of offending not only reflects individual prejudice but also reinforces systemic barriers to inclusion and acceptance.

Bullying represents a significant issue that requires substantial attention within both family environments and educational institutions. According to the official data communicated by Save the Children Romania, between 2021 and 2022, 10,971 bullying situations were registered in the official education system (as compared to 7,715 in 2020–2021).

Smoking and substance abuse are other public health issues that parents and the educational system must manage in the sense of prevention. Recent studies emphasized that the critical age that people start to smoke and remain smokers is before 14 years old and (Baciu, 2024; Dadulescu *et al.*, 2025)

It is essential to convey accurate information to the young generation, as stigmatization, even when achieved by using improper terminology, constitutes a form of abuse with lasting psychological effects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

These statistics highlight a pressing public health concern that necessitates immediate action. Comprehensive, age-appropriate education has been proven to reduce rates of unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, sexual violence, substance abuse and improve mental well-being. It empowers young individuals with the knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions and seek assistance when needed.

In a society where sexuality is for a lot of people tabu, it is incumbent upon the scientific, educational and medical communities to advocate for evidence-based solutions. Implementing comprehensive sexual education in the national curriculum transcends political discourse, being a public health imperative.

Although data slightly improved in the last decades, this initiative is not only timely but necessary for safeguarding the health and well-being of future generations.

To address these public health issues, I propose the following:

1. **Implementing Comprehensive Sexual Education Programs:** Introduce compulsory, age-appropriate sexual education within the Romanian educational curriculum. This program should encompass comprehensive topics such as reproductive health, consent, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and the promotion of healthy relationships.
2. **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Execute national initiatives aimed at enhancing awareness and education regarding sexual health, HPV vaccination, principles of consent.
3. **A Social-Emotional Learning** curricula integration in schools in order to build empathy, self-awareness, conflict resolution and responsible decision-making.
4. Establish well-defined, enforceable **policies that recognize bullying and name-calling** as public health concerns rather than solely disciplinary matters
5. **Healthcare Provider Training:** Provide educators and healthcare professionals with comprehensive tools and training to discuss sexual health accurately and empathetically.
6. **Policy Reforms and Funding:** Increase state funding for HPV vaccination programs and remove location and financial barriers to reproductive health services.

Comprehensive education is not subject to a moral, political or cultural debate; it is a matter of public health and human rights. Denying Romanian youth access to accurate, scientific information about their bodies and health may increase their risk of disease, abuse and systemic inequality.

Sincerely,

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Bucharest, Francisc Rainer Institute of Anthropology

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In Memoriam

THOMAS HYLLAND ERIKSEN
(1962–2024)



(Photo: EASA Newsletter, 7, 1992)

AND THE PARADOX OF NORWEGIAN ANTHROPOLOGY

*That I'll learn to die I believed it never;
Always young and wrapped in my own mantle,
I was rising my dreamful eyes to the star
Of the solitude.*

*When, suddenly, you came across my fair way,
Oh, you, so painfully sweet – oh, suffering;
To the bottom I drank the voluptuousness
Of pitiless death¹.*

¹ My translation – G.G. These are the first two among the five strophes of the famous Eminescu's poem.

These verses from Mihai Eminescu's *Ode (in Sapphic metre)* came to my mind when I learned that Thomas passed away. It is true that in 1883, when writing his poem, the Romanian Romantic poet was 33 years of age, whereas our contemporary Norwegian anthropologist died at 62², but the latter – as I knew him, with his dynamic and charismatic personality –, seemed to be a man beyond age.

We met many years ago at a memorable scientific event: in 1993, between 15 and 19 December, an international conference entitled *The Anthropology of Ethnicity. A Critical Review* took place at the University of Amsterdam. As the leading organizers mentioned in a *post festum* synthesis: “The main aim of the conference was critically to review the developments within the field since the publication of [Fredrik] Barth's *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* in 1969, over a period, thus, of almost twenty-five years”³. By their participation, a series of specialists – Fredrik Barth, Katherine Verdery, Anthony Cohen, Eugene Roosens, or (well-known, in spite of his youth) Thomas Hylland Eriksen – attached a real prestige to the conference. In the difficult conditions of the post-revolutionary historical moment in Romania, my participation at the Conference was a privilege as far as my expenses were entirely covered by the organizers. According to the programme, all the papers were distributed in five sections, *e.g.* a section about ethnicity and religion, another one about ethnicity and language, etc. Entitled “Ethnicity and Globalisation. Outline of a Complementarist Conceptualisation”, my paper was included in Section I: “Theory of Ethnicity”⁴, whose convenor was just Thomas Hylland Eriksen. I remember with pleasure that we communicated with mutual benefit; in the context of discussions, he appreciated my complementarist approach and, also, accepted my suggestion related to the usefulness of the distinction emic/etic for understanding the main ideas of his own paper.

Although our countries are geographically distant enough, we maintained a close connection. I, for one, was pleasantly surprised when a student of his – a girl visiting Romania – told me that Professor Eriksen had recommended to his students at the University of Oslo a text of mine about the Hegelian influence on the genesis of anthropology as a scientific discipline⁵. He also referenced the same article in *A History of Anthropology*, a notable volume – more than a handbook – which he published in cooperation with Finn Sivert Nielsen in 2001.

Founded in 1990, the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA, as usually labelled) constituted the best institutional context in the framework of which Thomas Hylland Eriksen could exhibit his exceptional virtues

² Thomas Hylland Eriksen lived between 1962 (6 February) and 2024 (27 November).

³ Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers (eds), *The Anthropology of Ethnicity. Beyond 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries'*, Amsterdam, Het Spinhuis, 1994, p. 1. (Other members of the organizing committee – who guided me during the conference – were Flip Lindo and Dmitri van den Bersselaar)

⁴ My paper was published later on in *Social Anthropology*, the journal of European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA), 1997, 5(2), pp. 197–209.

⁵ The reference at issue is: Gheorghiță Geană, “Discovering the Whole of Humankind. The Genesis of Anthropology through the Hegelian Looking-Glass”, in: Han F. Vermeulen & Arturo Alvarez Roldán (eds), *Fieldwork and Footnotes. Studies in the History of European Anthropology*, London and New York, Routledge, 1995, pp. 60–74.

requested by the profession of anthropologist. In presenting synthetically the first EASA Conference which had just been hosted (from 31 August to 3 September 1990) by the seven-centennial University of Coimbra⁶, Eriksen was writing: “By virtue of its number of participants alone [some 400 social anthropologists from virtually every European country], the conference demonstrated the need for a forum uniting anthropologists from the entire continent. Our three days together further indicated, in many ways, that a vast unexploited field for mutual intellectual enrichment potentially lies in the conjectures and divergences of the anthropological traditions in different academic milieux in Europe”⁷. Two years later, when he was appointed new editor of the Association’s *Newsletter*, the same author declared: “My hope for the *EASA Newsletter* is that it can be instrumental in creating a truly European anthropological community”⁸. A genuine devotion to anthropology and equally to the anthropologists’ problems propelled him to the role of President of EASA, in 2015–2016.

As a matter of fact, this promoting of anthropology within and over a large scale became a discreet extension of the manner to practise this scientific discipline in Norway! Eriksen himself observed, indeed, “the untypical situation of Norwegian anthropology”⁹. By these words, their author had in view the engagement of anthropology in the public sphere, a status based on the system of education in a country where anthropological knowing is implemented at *all levels of training*! Not at all accidentally, Signe Howell – a fellow countrywoman and professional colleague of Eriksen – observed that anthropology is proved to be in its milieu into a small country where “everyone feel themselves to have some kind of personal stake in national development”¹⁰.

⁶ ...*id est* in Portugal, that “balcony which opens on the infinite”, as Eugenio d’Ors called – by a splendid metaphor – this country. As to the inaugural EASA Conference, it was included among the local festivities dedicated to the great anniversary of the University.

⁷ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, “Memoirs of Coimbra”, in: *EASA Newsletter*, 3, 1990, p. 7 (the whole article: pp. 7–10).

⁸ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, “Renewing the Newsletter”, in: *EASA Newsletter*, 7, 1992, p. 8 (the whole article: pp. 7–8).

⁹ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, “The Otherness of Norwegian Anthropology”, in: Aleksandar Bošković (ed.), *Other People’s Anthropologies. Ethnographic Practice on the Margins*, New York and Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2008, p. 171 (the whole chapter: pp. 169–185).

¹⁰ Signe Howell, “Norwegian Academic Anthropologists in Public Spaces”, in: *Current Anthropology*, vol. 51, supplement 2, p. 275 (the whole article: pp. 269–277). Signe Howell (1942–2025) was herself a prominent figure among the pleiad of Norwegian specialists who appeared in the field of anthropology as a consequence of the policy towards this science in their country; see in this respect the volume: Synnøve K.N. Bendixsen and Edvard Hviding (eds), *Anthropology in Norway. Directions, Locations, Relations*, Canon Pyon, Sean Kingston Publishing, 2021. To come back to Signe Howell, she adopted the methodological canon of the profession by doing field research in Malaysia. She attained originality especially by exploring the topic of morality (as, for example, in Signe Howell, ed., *The Ethnography of Moralities*, Routledge, 1997). Unfortunately, she left the earthly existence on January 26, 2025, to the profound sorrow of all anthropologists in the world. By alluding to her personal authentic distinction, her University colleagues launched an overwhelming regret: “One of Norwegian anthropology’s brightest stars ceased to shine” (Thorger Kolshus, “Professor Signe Howell has passed away”, January 28, 2025, *Open Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, www.sv.uio.no).

This state of things involves a fascinating *paradox*. Everybody knows that, by its origin and essence, anthropology is a globalist or – in specific technical terms – a cross-cultural enterprise. However, to embrace a universalist ideal in a society profoundly preoccupied with proper identity means to cultivate a real paradox. Nevertheless, one should not seek into a paradox only a shady aspect. For example, the well-known logical paradoxes are challenges to the human intelligence, but reality runs differently; indeed, it is only at the speculative level of thought that Achilles does not surpass the tortoise. In our case, the universal is fully compatible with the autochthonous. Thus it came about that the Winter Olympic Games organised at Lillehammer in February 1994 satisfied both the universalistic Olympism and autochthonous Norwegian ethos¹¹.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen joins perfectly in this generous dialectical paradigm. In writing about the author of the book just mentioned here in our note 11, he mentioned that Klausen “always maintained in his lectures that anthropologists should be relativists away and critics at home”¹². As a rule, however, Eriksen shared in his own line the principle of his conationals. This propensity is obvious in the way he approached and treated such topics as ethnicity and nationalism, or the historical and theoretical problems of anthropology as a discipline.

The paradox that stamps the essence of Norwegian anthropology can equally be found out in the structure of the process of modernising the sociohuman reality. In his popular writing – consacrated also as a classical work – *Small Places, Large Issues*, Eriksen affirmed: “The central paradox of globalisation is, perhaps, that it has made the world both larger and smaller at the same time. It has become smaller in the sense that it is possible to travel anywhere in less than 24 hours, and that it is practically possible to have the same lifestyle anywhere in the world. On the other hand, it has become larger in the sense that we thereby know more about remote and ‘exotic’ places, and thus more easily recognise our mutual differences”¹³.

The relationship small–large can receive a strong intensity under the hypostasis ethnicity–globalisation (where, often, “ethnicity” – when associated to a state – becomes “nation”). Eriksen was early attracted to this topic; in his already mentioned “Memoirs” after the first EASA Conference he observed: “It is strange, for instance, that no workshop on questions relating to ethnicity was organised, since this is an important concern to many European social anthropologists”¹⁴. From then on he constantly dedicated his analytical intelligence to confronting the challenges raised by this sensitive topic. Among his contributions on this line, *Ethnicity and Nationalism. Anthropological Perspectives* remains exemplary. By the clear and convincing style of reasoning, as well as by the equilibrium between analytical and synthetical ways of

¹¹ See Arne Martin Klausen (ed.), *Olympic Games as Performance and Public Event. The Case of the XVII Winter Olympic Games in Norway*, New York & Oxford, Berghahn Books, 1999.

¹² Thomas Hylland Eriksen, “The otherness of Norwegian anthropology”, in: Aleksandar Bošković, *Op. cit.*, p. 175.

¹³ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Small Places, Large Issues. An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology*, 3rd ed., London, Pluto Press, 2010 (orig. 1995, 5th ed. 2023), p. 322.

¹⁴ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, “Memoirs from Coimbra”, in: *EASA Newsletter*, 3, 1990, p. 10 (the whole article pp. 7–10).

approach, this book may be considered as a model of hermeneutics in this domain. The author's assertions about ethnicity and globalisation are as subtle as they are sententious. Usually, after running over the variety of opinions set forth by the experts on a question at stake, Thomas Eriksen concludes with his own viewpoint. Thus, when approaching the relationship between the global and local he quotes Eric Hobsbawm, Ulf Hannerz, Roland Robertson, Jonathan Friedman, etc. and ends with his own decision: "We may also add that perhaps it is true that the world is a single place – but if so, it is locally constructed. Notwithstanding migration and other globalising tendencies, people still live in places"¹⁵. (Incidentally or not, this idea keeps him not far from his compatriot Fredrik Barth, who had insisted rather on boundaries than on cultural stuff as identifying ethnic identities.)

Beyond all these accomplishments, perhaps the best proof of Eriksen vocation for anthropology is his writing *A History of Anthropology* (2001, 2013). Such an appreciation takes into account that to write the history of a scientific discipline one should master (*i.e.* have the capacity of understanding and explain) not only a special theme or movement of ideas in a certain epoch, but all the significant theories, concepts, personalities, and currents that illustrated the becoming of the respective science in time, from its origins until today. While being convinced that anthropology crystallized as a science in XIXth century (when social and geocultural data about humanity on the one hand, and ideas of thinkers like Montaigne, Descartes, Hobbes, or Locke on the other hand, were brought together), Eriksen discovered nevertheless some modern elements of what he called "proto-anthropology". For example, he observed that Herodotus "wrote detailed travel narratives from various parts of Asia and Egypt, and (based on second hand information) from as far away as the land of the Scythians on the northern coast of the Black Sea, the Ethiopians, and the peoples of the Indus valley. In these narratives, far removed as they are from our present world, we recognise a problem that has pursued anthropology, in various guises, up to this day: how should we relate to 'the Other'? Are they basically like ourselves, or basically different?"¹⁶. In consistent pages, Kant's, Hegel's and other philosophers' conceptions about human nature are commented.

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Roughly speaking, Thomas Hylland Eriksen was a prolific author and covered in his activity the full spectrum of human existence. He was equally an influential *theoretician*, a diligent *fieldworker*, and an efficient *strategist*. As a fieldworker, he carried out intensive researches in Mauritius and Trinidad¹⁷.

¹⁵ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism. Anthropological Perspectives*, London, Pluto Press, 1993 (3rd ed. 2010), p. 150.

¹⁶ Thomas Hylland Eriksen (with Finn Sivert Nielsen), *A History of Anthropology*, 3rd ed., London, Pluto Press, 2013 (orig. 2001), p. 2.

¹⁷ It is interesting to find that other among his compatriots chose to carry out fieldwork in the same direction: Fredrik Barth went to New Guinea and Pakistan, Signe Howell did researches on

As theoretician and strategist, he did not make any concession to the requirements of scientific order.

After a life too quickly ended but honoured with such outstanding achievements, Thomas Hylland Eriksen will have been justified to say: *Non omnis moriar*¹⁸.

Gheorghiță Geană

Cercetător Științific gr. I – Inst. Antropologie „Fr. Rainer”

Chewong people in Malaysia and Lio in Flores (Indonesia), Ingrid Rudie on Kelantan in East Coast Malay, Arne Martin Klausen worked in the Indo-Norwegian Pilot Project for the modernisation of the Scandinavian fisheries of Kerala, etc. In the absence of a historical colonial empire (an advantage at hand of their British and French colleagues), Norwegian anthropologists oriented themselves, as preferential area for their fieldwork objectives, either towards the Sámi (indigenous people from the North of the country, with own culture, language, traditions, and identity), or (following – instinctively – the direction of early Vikings!) towards the people and cultures of South-East Asia.

¹⁸ The complete formulation is: *Non omnis moriar multaque pars mei / Vitabit Libitinam* (Horatius), that is: “I’ll not quite die and a great part of me / Will avoid Libitina”. (N.B.: Libitina was the goddess of funerary ritual in the ancient Roman pantheon, a symbol of death.)

THE WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY DAY NOTES AND THOUGHTS

IOANA-IULIANA SPERIATU¹

February 20, 2025. It was a great honor for me to participate this year in the celebration of the World Anthropology Day at the “Francisc I. Rainer” Institute of Anthropology of the Romanian Academy. The dedicated event took place at the House of Romanian Academy where the Institute resides and brought together renowned Romanian anthropologists, researchers, and professors, as well as students. Along with the Institute of Anthropology, other institutions were represented, such as: “Constantin Brăiloiu” Institute of Ethnography and Folklore from Bucharest, Prahova Society of General Anthropology and Museum of Natural Sciences from Prahova county, and the University of Bucharest (Faculty of Sociology, Faculty of History and Faculty of Letters). The event was in fact a double celebration for Romanian anthropology since this year marks the centennial anniversary of the first sociology field research in Romania under the coordination of Professor Dimitrie Gusti. In this light, the event was articulated around “The Purpose of Anthropology within the Bucharest Sociological School”, discussions being led by Dr. Marin Constantin, Director of “Francisc I. Rainer” Institute of Anthropology and Associated Professor in Cultural Anthropology at the University of Bucharest.

In the event opening, film sequences from *Drăguș – The Life of a Romanian Village* („Drăguș – viața unui sat românesc”) - the first Romanian ethnographic film, realized in 1929 by Professor Dimitrie Gusti (1880–1955) and his multidisciplinary team while the fifth sociological field campaign at Drăguș, Făgăraș (today Brașov) County -, introduced the audience to the atmosphere of the sociological fieldwork in Romania during the interwar period and created frames for the open dialogue on the role which the Gustian School of Sociology had to the origins of the Romanian Anthropology.

Professor Dr. Zoltan Rostas from the University of Bucharest, Doctoral School of Sociology, kicked off the talks by sharing valuable insights on the context of which sociological monography started in 1925 as an experimental field trip that students from the Sociology Seminar at the University of Bucharest conducted by Professor Dimitrie Gusti, took on the Easter Holiday to Goicea Mare, Dolj County (southern Romania). Professor Rostas evoked memories of Gustian monographers such as Mircea Vulcănescu or Henri H. Stahl, both prominent members of the Sociological School, each one with notable contribution to the

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development of the monograph theory and, respectively, monograph methodology. Participants discussed about the *luminous hall* („sala luminoasă”) – the monographers’ brain-storming evening laboratory under the leadership of Prof. Dimitrie Gusti –, and the progressive monographic learnings, including the methodology shaped and improved with year-by-year fieldwork research across the country. There were highlighted the intensive and fruitful fieldworks, but also the tensions and crisis that arose by the World War II inside and outside the School. Considering the multidisciplinary character of the monography the discussions turned on the anthropometry and bioanthropologists that dr. Francisc Reiner coordinated during fieldworks in villages such as: Nereju (1927), Fundu Moldovei (1928) and the second campaign in Drăguș (1932). Dr. Cristiana Glavce, renowned bioanthropologist and researcher at the Institute of Anthropology, introduced the personality of dr. Francisc Reiner (1874–1944) and talked about his visionary anthropometry research, based on which today human and human-machine activities in Romania are now grounded. That reminded me of learning from my previous scholar background back in ’90s when I studied at marketing seminars the optimization of products and processes with field applications, such as ergonomics or clothing/ shoes design, in which sizes of human body are instrumental. Back to 2025 event, I respectfully admired the dr. Francisc Rainer and his team’ anthropometry work that was comprised into the Romanian Anthropology Atlases and which Dr. Cristiana Glavce shared with participants. An emotional moment was that of Professor Dr. Gheorghiță Geană evoking the *historical destiny meeting* of the strong personalities of Dimitrie Gusti and Francisc Rainer and their vision of "sociology-as-anthropology" that would lay the foundation of the Romanian anthropology and, later, its institutionalization at the Rainer Institute, in 1964, by the efforts of another monograph researcher, named here Vasile V. Caramelea. Having in mind that Professor Dr. Gheorghiță Geană is a notable life-time researcher at the Institute since 1967, which is almost from the beginning of the anthropology institutionalization in Romania, it was a tremendous moment for me to realize how fortunate I am to meet in person such active witness of the Romanian cultural anthropology over its history.

Discussions continued by revealing the full image of the Gustian monography and it was Prof. Dr. Zoltan Rostas who especially caught my attention by sharing the reverse perspective of the Sociological School *when the monographers realized that they too were being studied*. As I am interested in the *reversed Otherness*, I found stories from the fieldwork which monographers shared over the time, like Henry H. Stahl did in his *Memories and Thoughts from the Old School of "Sociological Monographs"* (1981), being grounded resources in gaining further insights of the topics. The second part of the event was dedicated to the contemporary research in socio-cultural anthropology that use as their foundation the achievements of the Sociological School of Professor Dimitrie Gusti. Two perspectives of the continuation of the monography were brought to light: Dr. Sebastian Ștefănuță, high school professor and independent researcher, to whom I thank for the very insightful gift books, highlighted, from the general

theory perspective, the *Gustien echoes* of the socio-cultural anthropology school of Bucharest, while Leonard-M Rădulescu, MA student and researcher at the „Societatea de Științe Istorice” (*Historical Sciences Society*), Prahova County, presented, from the particular point of the methodology, a socio-history monography of a Prahova village community.

Professor Dr. Marin Constantin concluded the event by reinforcing the pioneering of the Gustien School – particularly in regards of the research methodology that once again demonstrated the visionary leadership of Professor Dimitrie Gusti and his team on what the Anthropology evolved today. Prof. Dr. Marin Constantin briefly presented the practice of the participatory observation that the Sociological School introduced early ‘20s in its monography research and the role of the method within today anthropology to better understanding the human life in its whole.

In this light the overall event was a celebration of human understanding and knowledge progress in which the Romanian cultural phenomenon of the Sociology School founded by Professor Dimitrie Gusti has still a story to tell. It was not just a history lesson of the Romanian anthropology evolving as a science, but a celebration of togetherness on the anthropology fieldwork. I am grateful for having the privilege of meeting and learning from such great anthropologists gathered on such a celebration day of Anthropology.

Ioana-Iuliana Speriatu

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOPS HELD
AT FRANCISC RAINER INSTITUTE OF ANTHROPOLOGY
OF ROMANIAN ACADEMY IN 2024

February 14

Archaeogenetics of Kinship: Challenges and prospects for a renewed conversation.
Dr. Tatjana Thelen, Univ. of Vienna

March 20

What counts as knowledge in the light of collaborative scientific practice. A cognitive ethnography of scientists' strategies and perceptions. Dr. Nora Nagel, Leibniz Univ. (Hanover)

April 3

Understanding Normative Diversity in Poland: Anomie and Modernity in Poland.
Prof Dr Rafal Smoczynski, Inst. of Philosophy and Sociology of Polish Academy

April 24

The Lion's Historian. Prof Sandra Swart, Stellenbosch Univ.

May 15

Thinking with Cases: Ethnographic case work and the management of uncertainty in pediatric oncology. Drd Timo Rossman, Goethe Univ. (Frankfurt)

May 29

Sleep and Sleeplessness in Germany: Rethinking Agency, Knowledge & Experience through Sleep. Dr. Julia Vorhölter, Max-Planck-Institute for Social Anthropology (Haale)

June 5

"AI-Cockpit: An Interdisciplinary Research Project on "Human in Command. Participatory Design and Research In Three Different Fieldlabs. Dr Cecilia Colloseus, Aalen Univ.

June 26

Using Large Language Models for Patients in Healthcare. MS Marvin Kopka, Technische Universität zu Berlin.

October 2

Personal Networks and Health: Collecting Network Data in a Romanian Rural Living Lab. Prof. Marian-Gabriel Hâncean, Univ. of Bucharest,

October 16

Hegemony, Ontology, and Dependency: Analyzing Culturalized Discursive Practices in Poland. Prof. Dr. Rafał Smoczyński, Inst. of Philosophy and Sociology of Polish Academy,

October 23

Transport Geopolitics at the Margins. Embedded Infrastructures in the Lower Danube Borderlands. Dr. Claudia Eggart - Centre for East European and International Studies (Berlin)

November 6

Back by popular demand, ontology. Productive tensions between anthropological and philosophical approaches to ontology. Dr. Julia Turska, Wageningen Univ.

November 13

A qualitative philosophy of psychiatry - (the making of) the case of treatment resistance research. Dr. David Lambert MA, Bielefeld Univ.